



Create Bee-utiful Spring Fashions

# CREATIVE MACHINE Embroidery

INSPIRATION

DIGITIZED DESIGNS

24  
MORE  
PAGES!

5

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•  
SHEER  
•  
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LEATHER

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By Alex Anderson



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# CREATIVE MACHINE Embroidery

VOLUME 16 • ISSUE 2

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Printed in USA



Please recycle this magazine.



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a note from  
the editor

## WE'RE BUGGIN' OUT!

Bugs are the latest trend in embellishment, and not just token butterflies. Moths, bees and ants are showing up on high fashion garments, emblazoned on glitzy purses and carved into intricate jewelry. So instead of showcasing our new Irresistible Insects embroidery collection on a gardening apron or picnic blanket, we placed our little bees on a bright pink silk skirt and adorned it with beads. See the results on page 48 and explore the possibilities for this collection further with a cute set of hand towels on page 54.

I love the look of large-scale embroideries. Combining several motifs to create one larger one is a great way to be your own designer without the need to conceptualize, draw, edit and digitize something from scratch. Many design collections offer endless combinations, and the skills needed to execute a large-scale design properly include adequate spacing, color sorting and sequencing. Multiple hoopings are typically necessary, and perfect alignment is a chore. Despite a beautiful end result, there's an easier way. Look for large designs that are already broken into smaller hoop-able sections. After embroidering the sections, piece together the fabric so the end result is a large design without the worry of an off-kilter stitch. Learn more in our Four Corners Convertible Tote on page 38.

Embroidering sheer silky fabric for the first time? Don't do it alone! Turn to page 44 for guidance and find even more tips at [cmemag.com](http://cmemag.com). We're here to get you through the challenges with fabulous results, without the need for a ton of test stitchouts. Make the glamorous capelet featured on those pages as an added bonus.

Speaking of first-timers, tell your friends that a new season of Absolute Beginner Machine Embroidery will be available soon on our website. After the success of Series 1, a full 26 episodes, we filmed another 26 episodes to compile into Series 2. You'll find great beginner information as well as a ton of designs and projects to fuel your creativity for quite a while! Host Sara Gallegos is back to help get you super comfortable with your embroidery machine and learn all it can do.

Enjoy the issue and happy spring!

*Ellen*

Ellen March

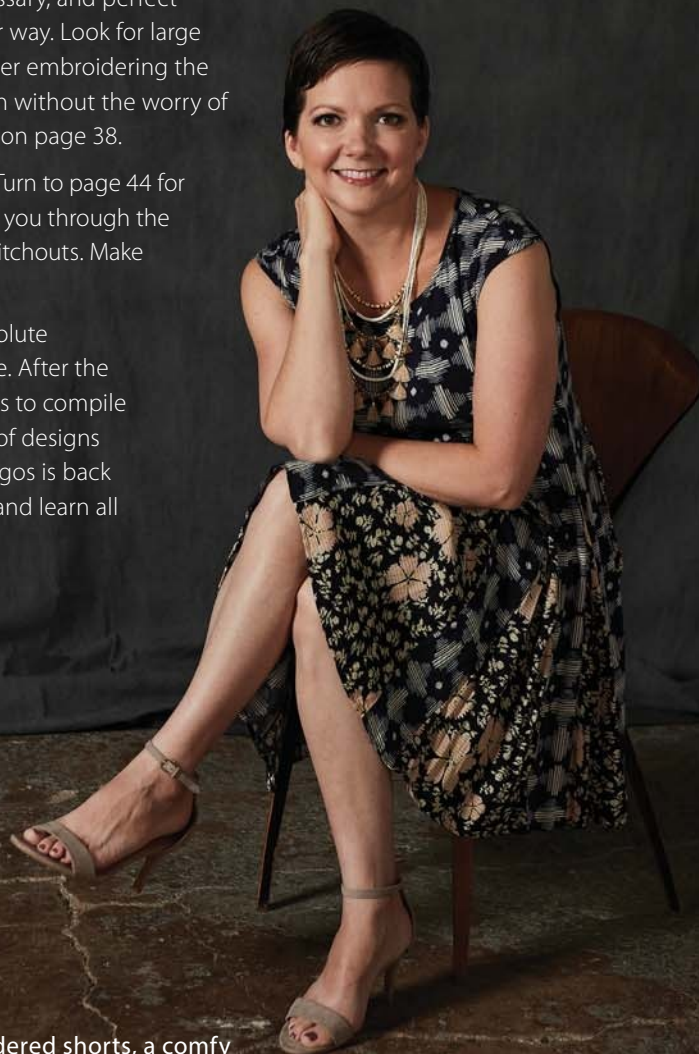
Content Director

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of projects  
& inspiring  
techniques!

## coming attractions

Venture outdoors in the warmer weather wearing cute embroidered shorts, a comfy keyhole top and a fashionable belt. Not warm enough in your neck of the woods? Try our poncho project, but be sure to personalize it with embroidery. Find this and more in the May/June *Creative Machine Embroidery*, on newsstands April 18, 2017.

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# contributors

## lisa archer



**("In the Hoop: Mini Purse" — page 28)** is the owner and creative director of Pickle Pie Designs. She loves the challenge of creating in-the-hoop designs that reflect her personal style.

**Home Base:** Holly Springs, NC  
**Visit:** [picklepiedesigns.com](http://picklepiedesigns.com)

## lori baker



**("Quilt This: Scan & Stitch" — page 22)** is on the editorial staff of *McCall's Quilting* and *Quiltmaker* magazines. She has sewn most of her life and has a rich heritage of sewists, quilt makers and crafters in her family.

**Home Base:** Westminster, CO

## pamela cox



**("Unique Technique: Allover Embroidery" — page 24; "Rustic Revival" — page 32)** received a fashion design degree from The Boston School of Design with an emphasis

on patternmaking. Purchasing her first embroidery machine in '07 added a new dimension to her education.

**Home Base:** Dublin, NH

## sara gallegos



**("Quote Me" — page 66)** loves to share her passion for sewing and embroidery in classes and tutorial videos. You can find links to all of her videos on her website

or visit her Baby Lock dealership and Quilt Shop Decorative Stitch in her hometown.

**Home Base:** Shelby Township, MI  
**Visit:** [sewpositivelysara.com](http://sewpositivelysara.com)

## michele mishler



**("Sheer Factor Capelet" — page 44)** is a freelance consultant and educator who specializes in creating projects for the home embroidery enthusiast. Her projects have

been featured in numerous magazines, and her embroidery designs are available exclusively through Oregon Patchworks at MM Embroidery Designs. She teaches machine embroidery and software in the Pacific Northwest.

## stacy schyler



**("Four Corners Convertible Tote" — page 38; "Pretty in Paris" — page 58)** is a self-taught seamstress and self-proclaimed fabric junkie whose goal is to reach SABLE

(Stash Accumulation Beyond Life Expectancy). She lives in Kansas with her family and blogs about her sewing adventures daily.

**Home Base:** Wichita, KS  
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## lisa shaw



**("Software Savvy" — page 20)** has been involved with machine embroidery education and inspiration since the mid '90s. Lisa's teaching philosophy is that the computer is a tool, and the

artistic beauty that we can create with the computer is inside each of us.

**Home Base:** Elbert, CO  
**Visit:** [sew-bubbles.com](http://sew-bubbles.com)

## katrina walker



**("Bee's Knees Skirt" — page 48)** specializes in working with silk and wool. She enjoys designing projects for home sewists and playing with her flock of sheep.

**Home Base:** Spokane, WA  
**Visit:** [katrinawalker.com](http://katrinawalker.com)

### Learn More

about the experts and designers featured in this issue at [cmemag.com](http://cmemag.com).



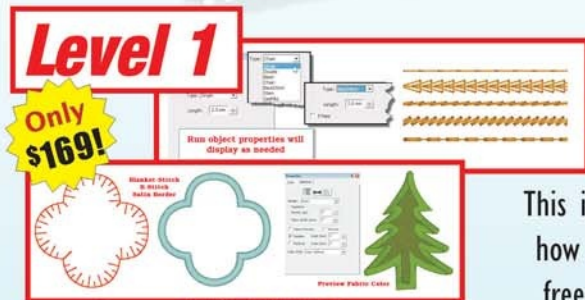


## - This Issue's Inside Look - **StitchArtist™**

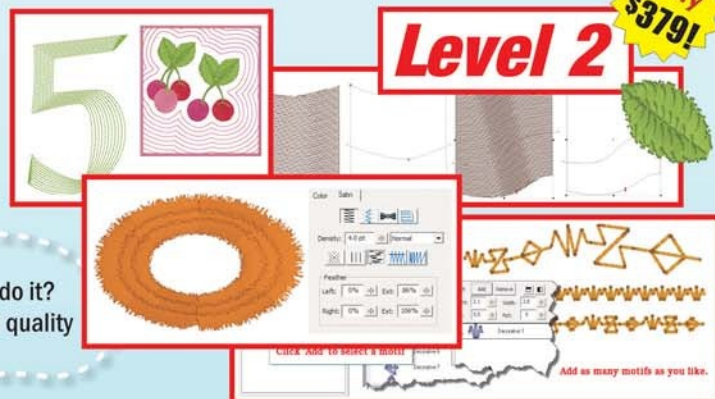
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# tips & tricks



## PRESCRIBED PERFECTION

Use forceps when turning projects through small openings — perfect for in-the-hoop projects!

Annabelle W., email

## CUP THEM CLOSE

Keep your snips and other tools close by attaching a suction-cup soap dish to the side of your machine. If you're having trouble, try adding glycerin to the cups to help them adhere better.

Elena H., Facebook



## Visit [cmemag.com](http://cmemag.com)

for techniques and tricks to further your embroidery.



## IMMACULATE IRON

If you won't be using your iron for a while, empty out the water and then use a mixture of white vinegar and water to clean it. This eliminates hard water buildup and increases the iron life span.

Heather D., Facebook

## EARBUD SPOOL

Use an empty spool to keep your earbuds untangled and travel-ready.

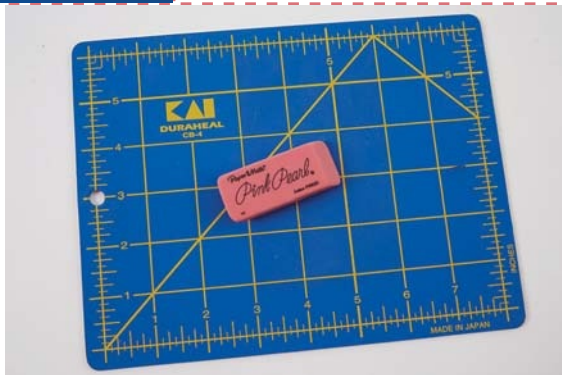
Amanda C., email



## PINK PICKUP

Use a standard pencil eraser to clean out the crevices and cracks on your cutting mat.

Ricky T., Facebook



## Send your tips and tricks

to [info@cmemag.com](mailto:info@cmemag.com) or post them on our Facebook fan page at [facebook.com/creativemachineembroidery](https://facebook.com/creativemachineembroidery). If your tip is published, you'll receive a fabulous gift.



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# must haves

the latest & greatest tools & designs



1. Embrace the coming spring and all that it brings with the **CME Irresistible Insects Embroidery Design Collection**. You won't mind finding an infestation of these cute little critters in your house! Perfect for home décor or as a unique garment embellishment, this collection of tone-on-tone insect designs will charm anyone who encounters them. (\$3.99/design, \$19.99/collection, [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com))

2. With the **Collar Perfect** tool, easily press out any areas of your work that have multiple layers without embedding the embroidery design onto the fabric layers. Designed for quick and easy touch-ups on collars and shirt pockets and perfect for travel, the tool can also be used flat like an iron and has five built-in temperature settings based on fabric type. (\$34.95, [collarperfect.com](http://collarperfect.com))

3. Add some desert décor to your space with the **Plush Cactus ITH Design**. Place these cute cacti into planters or use them as prickly accent pillows. Add a flower for a personal touch. (\$4, [sevensemporium.com](http://sevensemporium.com))





4. Baby Lock's new **Valiant 10 Needle Embroidery Machine** provides the home embroiderer with professional results and industrial power. This machine features 120 built-in embroidery designs, four hoop sizes ( $7\frac{7}{8} \times 14$ ,  $5\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{8}$ ,  $4 \times 4$  and  $1\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{3}{8}$ ), Needle-Cam™ Digital Camera, color visualizer, on-screen design and text editing, front-loading bobbin system and many bonus accessories. With the ability to stitch 1,000 stitches per minute, you'll be able to achieve the most dense designs in a matter of minutes. (**\$18,999, [babylock.com](http://babylock.com)**)

5. Make your life easier with a **Tadpole Tape Cutter**. Stop the fuss when taping down your in-the-hoop projects. Available in three sizes: 1", 1½" and 2". Watch the easy how-to video and check out how other people are using the tool with #cutTape. (**\$5.99, [tadpoletapecutter.com](http://tadpoletapecutter.com)**)

6. Add some whimsical designs to your life with the **Deer Antler and Flower Embroidery Design**. Follow the romantic woodland theme with the added charm of leafy greens and rosettes that are popular in homes everywhere. (**\$2.99, [etsy.com/shop/NestGiftCo](http://etsy.com/shop/NestGiftCo)**)





# must haves

the latest & greatest tools & designs



7. When stitching out designs with specialty thread, like metallics, let the **Thread Director** do all of the hard work. This tool changes the orientation of the machine's spool to feed flat into the thread path, preventing thread twists and breakage. **(\$24.99, [thethreaddirector.com](http://thethreaddirector.com))**

8. Create the perfect spring-inspired quilt with the **Wildabon Quilt Pattern** by Carolyn Friedlander in collaboration with Leah Duncan. The pattern includes detailed instructions and a large collection of motifs to appliqué onto any project. The pattern includes instructions for four quilt sizes (42"-square, 40"-square, 40"x60" and 60"-square) as well as a set of 20" pillow shams. As an added plus, the quilt is fat-eighth-friendly. **(\$18, [carolynfriedlander.com](http://carolynfriedlander.com))**

9. Protect your machine's hoops from temporary spray adhesive buildup with **Hoop Shields**. The easy-to-clean shields are specifically designed to match the standard hoop sizes of the most popular embroidery machine models. **(prices vary, [sewconcept.com](http://sewconcept.com))**



10



**10.** Cover up rough or itchy stitches with the **Cloud Cover Stitch**. This lightweight fusible material is designed to be used in conjunction with a stabilizer when embroidering. It also prevents unraveling and shredding so designs hold up longer, and works great on delicate fabrics. Available in black or white rolls of 20"x25 yds. **(\$90, [htc-retail.com](http://htc-retail.com))**

**11.** Keep your hot-fix products organized and safe with the **Hobby Holster**. Made of silicon, this holster will keep you from accidentally burning yourself with tools that heat up to 400°F. The holster conveniently grips to any smooth, non-porous surface and comes in a wide variety of sizes and colors to choose from. **(prices vary, [holsterbrands.com](http://holsterbrands.com))**

**12.** It's time to hit the road and take the path less traveled with the **Vintage Glamping Camper**. Even if you're not traveling, you can decorate your kitchen towels or other accessories with this cute nod to the spirit of adventure. **(\$2.99, [etsy.com/shop/TheAppliqueDiva](http://etsy.com/shop/TheAppliqueDiva))**

11

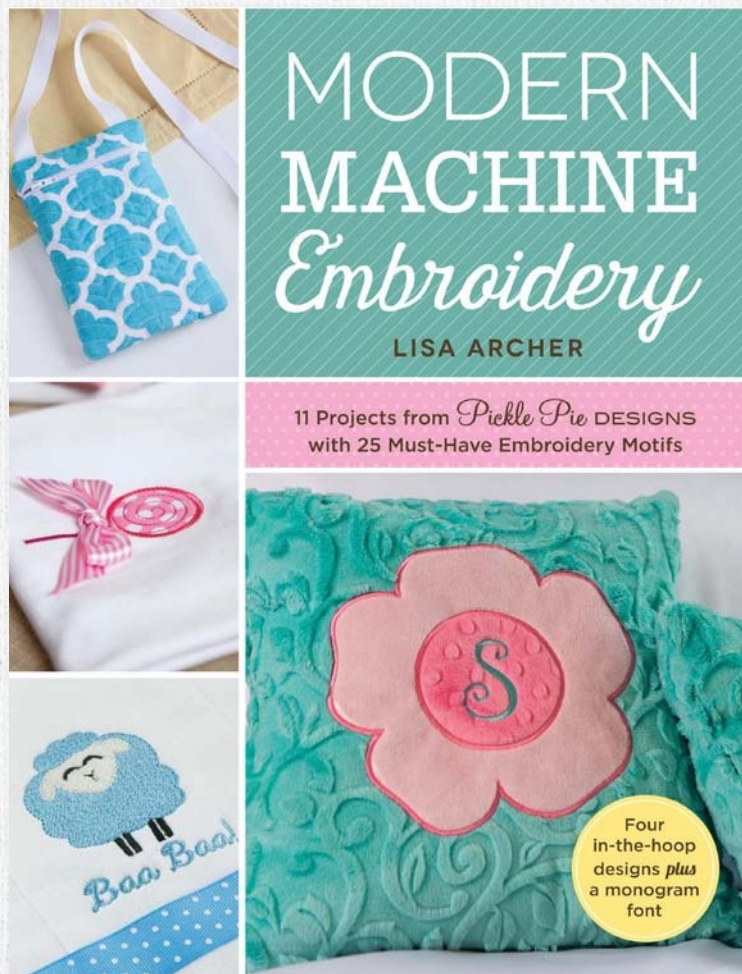


12





# Discover the Magic of "In-The-Hoop" Embroidery



Go from plain to personalized with embroidery from well-known Pickle Pie designer, Lisa Archer! Learn how to create fashionable appliques and custom monograms, as well as amazing in-the-hoop embroidery projects that take full advantage of today's embroidery machine capabilities. *Modern Machine Embroidery* also includes a DVD of 25 must-have embroidery designs, including three in-the-hoop projects and a complete alphabet.

This book makes stitching professional-quality embroidery as easy as (*pickle*) pie!

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# All About *Thread*

There are a lot of options when it comes to embroidery thread. Choosing the right one can take a project from ordinary to extraordinary. Read on to learn about thread and how to make the best selection every time.

## PROPERTIES

When it comes to thread, **weight** is determined by the length of thread in kilometers that it takes to make one kilogram. For example, if 40 kilometers of thread weighs one kilogram, then the thread is 40-wt. If a kilogram only holds 30 kilometers, then it's 30-wt. The higher the number in weight, the finer the thread is. Most professionally digitized designs are intended to use 40-wt. two-ply thread. If a different thread is chosen, adjustments to the embroidery machine's settings may be necessary.

A good time to choose a finer thread is when you're stitching dense

or small designs; choose heavier thread for fill stitches, as they will cover the area better. Using several thread weights in one design adds dimension and visual interest.

**Ply** refers to the number of strands that twist together to form the final thread. Higher ply numbers will make a thicker thread — for example, three-ply thread is thicker than two-ply thread.

**Twist** is the number of turns per inch the plies are twisted. A small twist number may cause fraying or breakage, while too many twists may cause knotting, looping or snarling. Quality thread has a well-balanced twist.

**Denier** is the measure of synthetic fibers. It's the opposite of weight, in that weight is the length measurement of a fixed weight, and denier is the weight measurement of a fixed length — 9,000 meters, to be exact. Denier is measured in grams per ply. Most embroidery thread is 120d/2, which means that it is two plies of 120-denier fiber twisted together for a total of 240 denier. Higher numbers here equal thicker thread.

**Tex** is the weight in grams of 1,000 meters of thread. If a 1,000-meter thread weighs 25 grams, it's Tex 25. Heavier thread has higher numbers.

## CONSTRUCTION

To make **spun** thread, cotton or polyester fibers are spun into single yarns and then twisted together. Spun thread usually produces lint. High-quality thread produces less lint than lower quality, and polyester produces less lint than cotton.

**Core** threads have a poly core with spun cotton or polyester fibers wrapped around it. They have fuzz on the surface, but the continuous filament core gives the thread strength and durability.

**Textured** thread is made of polyester or nylon filaments that are mechanically textured for fuzz and stretch. This

thread type is voluminous, elastic, soft, full, thermally insulating and moisture-transporting.

**Filament** threads are made from multiple continuous strands of polyester, rayon or nylon twisted together. They have little to no lint and are soft and shiny. Rayon is the weakest filament thread and isn't particularly colorfast. Nylon melts easily, and it becomes brittle and tends to discolor over time. Polyester is soft, strong and colorfast.

**Monofilament** thread is a single strand of nylon or polyester. The latter has a higher heat tolerance than the former; nylon may melt under the iron.

## FINISHES

Finishes are the final touch on the thread production process. Thread with soft finishes are dyed and lubricated.

**Mercerized** thread is treated in a solution to make the fibers swell, which controls tension, improves dye reception, and adds luster and strength.

Thread that is **gassed** is passed through a flame to reduce fuzz and increase sheen.

**Glazed** thread has starches and chemicals added to it, which increases luster, strengthens resistance to abrasion and keeps the plies together. Glazing produces a glossy, hard finish to protect the thread, but the glaze can rub off and gum up the needle, so it is only recommended for hand work.



### STITCHES PER SPOOL, 40-WT. RAYON

(Average Stitch Length = 4-5mm)

22 yd. spool  $\approx$  4,000 stitches

250 yd. spool  $\approx$  44,000 stitches

850 yd. spool  $\approx$  156,000 stitches



## SPECIALTY THREADS



### Shrinking Thread

- Formulated to shrink on contact with heat, producing a smocked effect.
- Works best with running, stippling or zig-zag stitches, simple embroidery, grid, swirls and quilting designs.
- Use steam generously when pressing, but don't touch the iron directly to the thread unless you are prepared for it to shrink about 30% immediately. Stabilizing can help to control the shrinkage.
- Use with soft, lightweight fabrics that gather easily for best results.
- Available in 40-wt.
- Usually used in the bobbin.
- For maximum puckering, use as both top and bobbin threads and stitch with a 65/9 to 80/12 needle.



### Metallic Thread

- Available in 40-wt.
- Use a 80/12 to 100/16 needle that is specifically for metallic thread, or use a titanium or topstitching needle.
- Use with designs that have long stitches.
- Best with soft materials and backings.
- Use cut-away stabilizer rather than tear-away.
- Machine wash in hot water up to 140°F; don't use bleach.
- Cool iron or dry clean.

### Wool Thread

- Only available in 12-wt.
- Is three times thicker than standard thread.
- Has a fuzzy, matte look.
- Creates soft, fluffy textured designs.
- Use with medium- to heavyweight fabrics, such as wool, linen and lightweight denim.
- Combine with another fiber, such as acrylic, to give a crewel effect.
- After stitching, the embroidery can be brushed to give the thread a soft, fluffy texture.
- Use a 100 or 110 needle, very low tension and cut-away stabilizer.



### Ultraviolet-Activated Thread

- Charges with light.
- May need up to 30 minutes to activate.
- Thread appears white or pastel when embroidered, but turns to a brighter hue when exposed to sunlight; out of the sun, it will return to its original color.
- Use in combination with regular embroidery thread to produce colorful designs.
- Available in 40-wt.
- Should be used with a size 12 needle.
- Machine wash in cool water.
- Don't use bleach or iron directly on the embroidery.



### Variegated Thread

- Available in many colors, ranging from subtle gradations of one color (also called ombre) to bold and bright blocks of several colors.
- Two different thread colors can be twisted together for a mottled effect.



Find ExtraGlow Glow-in-the-Dark Thread at [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com).

### Glow-in-the-Dark Thread

- Glows in the dark or under black light for up to 15 hours.
- Picks up light from artificial and natural sources.
- Made from polypropylene or polyester and comes in 30-, 35- and 40-wt.
- Wash in cool water or dry clean; don't use bleach.
- Dry on low; use a press cloth when ironing.

### Silk Thread

- Three-ply, reflective and strong.
- Comes in 50-wt.
- Expensive.
- Limited colors.
- Use a 75/11 to 80/12 size needle.

**Bonding** is the application of a special resin to continuous filament nylon or polyester thread. It produces a tough, smooth coat that resists abrasion and keeps plies secure.

## SPOOL/CONE SIZE

Thread comes on small vertical spools, bigger spools, mini-cones, cones and king cones. Choose small spools if your goal is to collect a variety of colors. Large spools run smoothly and are a good choice for collecting basic colors. Thread unwinds more easily from larger spools.

Larger spools may fit directly on some machines with either a vertical or horizontal spool pin, while others may require a separate, independent thread stand to sit behind or next to the machine. A favorite work-around for this is to place a large spool or cone in a cup or mug by the machine, which keeps it in place while allowing it to move as necessary.

Parallel-wound thread has each wind sitting parallel to the one before it. Each row of thread on the spool is one thread thickness below the previous row. The thread unwinds from the spool one row at a time from top to bottom and back again. It works best on a vertical spool pin. Using a horizontal spool pin pulls the thread over the spool end, which may cause twisting, kinking, fraying and breakage.

Cross-wound thread crosses over itself, winding in a Z-pattern up and down the spool. Place these threads on a horizontal spool pin so the thread pulls over the spool's upper edge.

## CARE

Wrap thread in plastic wrap and keep it in a cool, dry place (ideally 68° with 60% humidity). Keep it out of direct sunlight so it won't fade or dry out — dry, brittle thread will break and fray. ⓘ

### DESIGN

Butterfly: *CME*, Irresistible Insects Collection: [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com).

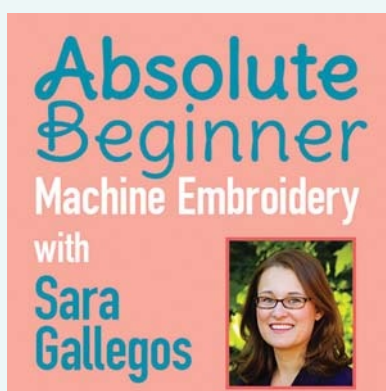
### SOURCES

Madeira provided the Heavy Metal and variegated thread: [madeirausa.com](http://madeirausa.com).

Robison-Anton Textile Co. provided the glow-in-the-dark thread: [robison-anton.com](http://robison-anton.com).

Shopper's Rule provided the Incredible Shrinking Thread: [shoppersrule.com](http://shoppersrule.com).

SolarActive International provided the ultraviolet-activated thread: [solaractiveintl.com](http://solaractiveintl.com).



Learn more about embroidery thread in Episode 2 of Absolute Beginner Machine Embroidery. Find the series and the Madeira Metallic Glamour Smartbox shown in the episode at [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com).



# Software Savvy

## Combining Designs

BY LISA SHAW

Learn more with Lisa Shaw's machine embroidery webinars at [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com).

Although many embroidery machines offer on-board editing, embroidery software provides many more options for creative experimentation, especially when it comes to combining designs. Read more to learn about combining embroidery designs, both in software and at the machine.

### FORMATS & ZIPPED FILES

The embroidery machine requires that embroidery designs be unzipped and in a specific format. This is likely the issue if you find yourself in a situation where you can see the design on the USB but not on the machine. For those that use a Mac computer, this is less of a problem because the Mac operating system expects you to double click on the zipped file in Finder, and it unzips all the contents to a folder with the name of the zipped file.

For those on Windows computers, things can be a little confusing. On most operating systems, you can see inside the zipped file, as if it were a folder, without unzipping it. In this case, you'll have to take an extra step to unzip the files; most operating systems include this function. Using the File > Open command in your embroidery software may not allow you to access these files

in the same way. The program may not be able to view the contents of a zipped file, so you must unzip the file that contains your embroidery designs before you can open them.

Some embroidery software includes importing or merging function so that you do not have to unzip your files. This step is different than "opening" an embroidery design file; it would be more like importing or merging a stitch file. The difference between opening an embroidery design and importing or merging an embroidery design is really quite simple. When you open the design, you're working on that original file. If you merge a design into an empty design page in your software, you're really just taking a copy of that file and bringing it in to what you are working on. Your original is intact: zipped or unzipped, it is untouched.

### PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

When you combine multiple designs, the number of stitches is going to increase in the overall design. A larger number of stitches may require you to choose a different stabilizer or hooping technique. Doing a test stitchout with a similar fabric and the stabilizer you intend to use will help you develop your "recipe"

for successful machine embroidery.

Consider this combined design of the bear and two flowers (on page 21). You may have stitched the bear by itself and the flowers by themselves successfully with your tear-away stabilizer. However, the combination of these three designs creates a new design that has not yet been tested with those materials. You need to be aware of the changes you're making by combining designs.

### OVERLAP

In addition to an increased number of stitches in the design, be mindful of areas that overlap **(A)**. In this example, a new design was created by placing the ladybug bear on top of the two flowers. You can see that the wings overlap the leaves of the flowers, creating what could be a very dense area of stitches. When you combine designs like this at the machine, the on-board editing software is not sophisticated enough to remove those areas of stitching. This is something you can address with software. Check your software features to see if you need to manually edit out the stitches or if your software has a function such as Remove Hidden Stitches when you save the stitch file **(B)**. Removing the stitches underneath the

overlap will eliminate bulk, lumps and bumps in these areas.

## COLOR ORDER

A single embroidery design is created by a digitizer with a specific stitch order in mind. When they provide photographs of actual stitchouts of their designs, you can get an idea as to what they envisioned the design would be stitched on, for example. They cannot take into account every single way that a design can be used by the consumer.

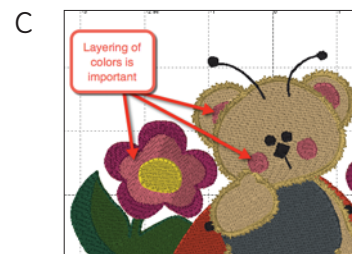
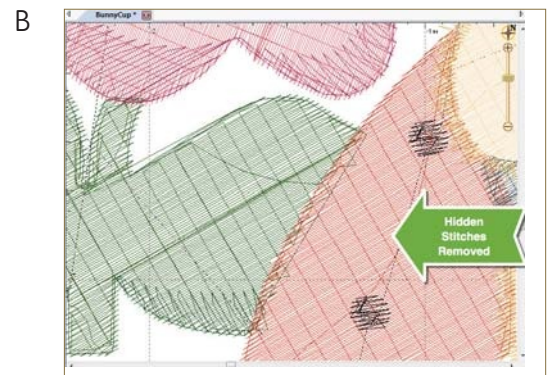
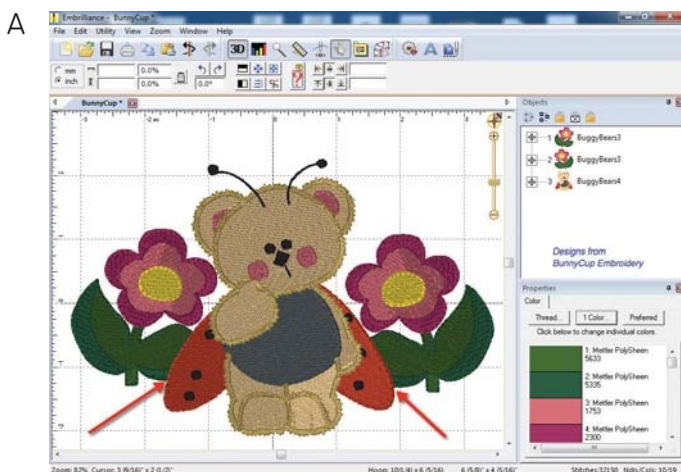
When you combine designs to create your own layout, you have to approach things like a digitizer. You want the best stitched results, but you probably also want to save some time at the machine. One way to do this is to combine colors by manually reordering the color breaks of the design in your object pane, filmstrip or timeline, as the names vary. Keep in mind that when you do this, you are altering the actual design file even if your software has both a working file and stitch file. A “working file” is a software file that not only contains the stitches of the designs but may also contain object information like

the individual designs as complete objects. This means you can just select that design object and move it around and make changes. Once you start manually moving the color breaks around, like moving the green of the right flower to stitch after the green of the left flower, you no longer have two flowers. Instead, you are combining stitches so you will not be able to select just the flower on the left and move it around. This is not bad or wrong, just something to be aware of.

Some software programs have an automatic function called Color Sort, and this can be an amazing time saver. This function automatically combines like colors in one step. In addition to being mindful of the digitizer’s original plan, check your software to see how this function actually works. Some programs simply run through the entire design and combine all the thread colors that are the same while others take into consideration the original stitching order. In this bear and flower design, the pink of the flower is the same as the cheeks and ears, but you can see that the ears are tucked in behind the outline of the

head **(C)**. You might be able to combine the pink of the flower to stitch at the same time as either the ears or the cheeks, but not both.

Some software programs color sort on screen so that you can immediately see the results. This may be convenient, but it is very important to check the file by running the stitch simulator to make sure that it combined them in the way you wanted. If you run the sewing simulator and see that it did something you didn’t like, such as combining all the pinks into one color break and mucking up the layers, you can “Undo” before you save the undesirable file. Other software programs run the Color Sort and ask you to save the resulting stitch file under a new name so that your original file is still intact. In order to confirm or see the resulting combined colors, you would want to open the sorted stitch file that you just saved. Once you gain experience with your software and become familiar with how it does things such as remove hidden stitches or sort colors, you may find that you don’t need to double-check its work. ⓘ







*Quilt* This

# *Scan & Stitch*

BY LORI BAKER



I remember exactly when I got my first embroidery machine. It was in 1994. We'd just moved to a small farming community where housing costs were amazingly low. Two of our children were gone from home and we actually had disposable income. I'd been sewing on my faithful little workhorse of a sewing machine for a little over 20 years so I was thinking of purchasing a new machine.

My mom had recently gotten a new sewing machine that embroidered, and we'd played with it on my last couple of visits to her house. I was intrigued to say the least. I shopped and shopped, checking features and prices. I finally decided which sewing/embroidery machine I wanted and came home with my new toy.

The embroidery field on that machine was about 4"x4". I had such fun learning all the tricks and putting extra touches on nearly everything I made. A few years later, a new machine came out and I upgraded. With that machine,

my embroidery designs could be 4"x8" or so. Then within a couple of years, they added a turnable hoop that meant my designs could be about 8" in both directions. But now, ten years later, even that seems pretty small. I'm embroidering on a Baby Lock Destiny these days, and the designs can be huge. It makes embroidering even more fun, and by placing designs next to one another (which is really easy), I can do all over embroidery on the fabric for a garment or a feature fabric for a quilt.

There are other advantages to the newer machines. I especially love the bright lights and the size of the sewing space. But there is one feature that I didn't imagine in my wildest dreams when I got that first embroidery machine in 1994. When I made the quilt shown here, I found a Celtic knot design that I liked online (one that didn't have a copyright). I printed it, put the printed page on the special scanner tray and attached the tray to my Destiny. The Destiny scanned the design

and turned it into an embroidery design. Once I did a bit of editing, resizing and manipulating, I had a lovely addition for the border of my quilt.

That made me think — what else could I scan and turn into an embroidery design? One of my sons is an artist. I can turn his art into embroidery designs. And what about the preschool drawings I've saved from my children and grandchildren? They would make great blocks for a quilt.

Perhaps I could scan part of a fabric I've used in a quilt, resize the design and embroider it on the blocks. I could simplify that scanned design from the fabric and turn it into a design to use for quilting my quilt. Or maybe I could take the design from the scanned fabric, make it small and use it as part of the quilt label.

Machine embroidery and quilting go hand in hand. The possibilities just go on and on. Play with your machine and explore those possibilities. 🧵



## PIECING IT TOGETHER

Inspired by many of the modern quilts, I decided I'd make an extra-large churn dash block. I drew out a 39" block on graph paper, then string-pieced the colored parts and stitched them together with the ivory background fabric. Using a stack of the 8" blocks leftover from filming a video about string piecing, I made enough more to frame the churn dash block. To create a symmetrical pattern, I added the dark blue border in order to use an even number of blocks around the outside of the quilt so I'd get the diamond pattern in the two outside rows. My final step was to add the embroidery.



# Unique Technique

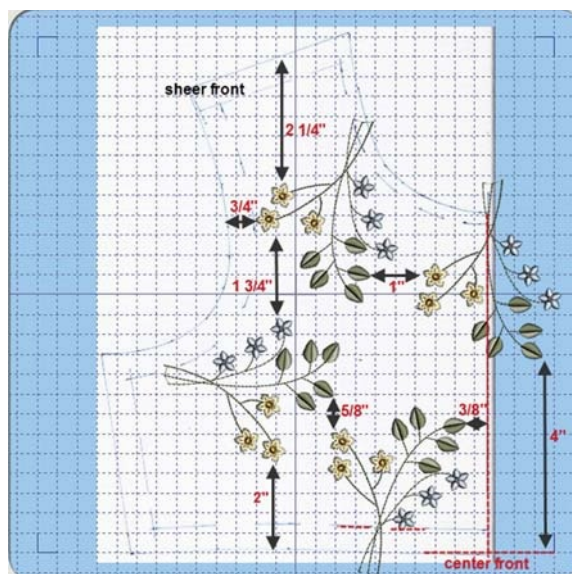
## Allover Embroidery

BY PAMELA COX

Let's begin by defining the difference between a combined design and an allover design. In a combined design, several elements are individually placed, relative to each other, to fill a specific size for a specific project. An allover design incorporates various elements that flow together to produce a pattern that can be repeated, creating the look of original fabric.

When fabric displaying an overall design or pattern is purchased by the yard, the necessary pattern pieces are strategically placed to showcase the desired effect. However, when creating original fabric, it becomes more practical to reverse the thought process: first consider the final project or a pattern's size and shape before beginning the design layout process **(A)**. For this sample, we'll be working on creating a design to cover a 20" pillow front. Embroidery software becomes a huge asset during this phase, especially if the program allows a pattern piece to be scanned into the program or lets you

A



select a custom size hoop, enabling you to view a large area in its entirety. Since a large overall pattern must be broken down into stitch-able units, another desirable program feature is placement guides, helping you to piece the overall design back together.

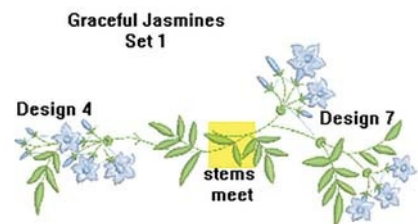
Before we go any further, it must be said that creating a large overall design will likely involve a good deal of trial and error. The first step is to choose the right embroidery collection. Look for collections that offer smaller, coordinating elements that complement larger designs or include individual elements that can be easily joined to create a longer or larger unit.

Working with a collection that fits those parameters, such as the Graceful Jasmines collection by Graceful Embroidery, first select two elements that can be combined to cover a large area but include individual elements that can be used for endings and beginnings as space requires. Two designs from Set 1, #4 and #7, were joined by allowing the stems to curve into each other **(B)**. Since we're working to design a pillow front, rotate the combined design 45° and place it in the top left corner of the workspace to begin an overall diagonal pattern **(C)**. Copy and paste the design to create a diagonal design, ending with a single design #7. Copy the combined strip and paste one above the original and one below. Don't be afraid to rely on what looks good when gauging distances as optical illusion must be factored into overall designs. Math is important (equal distances, angles, etc.) but truly the eye is the deciding factor here.

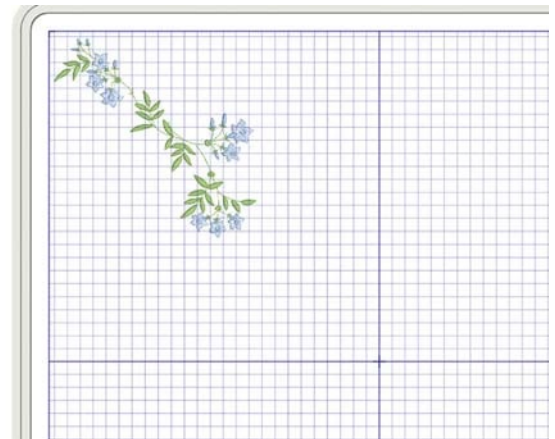
Don't be concerned if the design falls outside of the workspace. This first attempt will help you determine where a single design ends the row nicely and where a bit of creative editing might be needed **(D)**.

Once the entire space is filled, the overall design looks promising but falls short of the envisioned outcome. The open area, or negative space, is as important to the overall beauty of a design as the filled spaces. In an attempt to improve the negative space, flip every other line horizontally, alternating the direction of the top leaf groups and the placement of the filled spaces be-

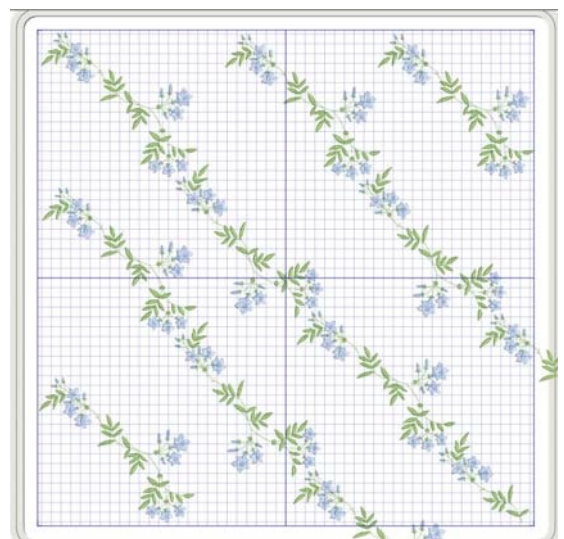
**B**



**C**



**D**





tween each row **(E)**. This small change does improve the overall pattern but still misses the mark.

Let's look again at the original combined units, in this case #4 and #7. Consider filling in the entire area from a different angle. Instead of working with a continuous diagonal line, think about the pillow front in quadrants. To get started, place the combined design on the diagonal in the upper right quarter **(F)**. Add and adjust additional elements (indicated with dark leaves) to fill as much of the required area as possible, then evaluate the open areas. For this sample, #7 fit nicely in the lower left corner while a new design, #6 from Set 1, proved to be a perfect fit for the upper right corner. The free download nicely completed the overall design by filling in open areas between the rows **(G)**. This block can now be laid out in several different, larger patterns or repeated infinitely to create any required fabric size **(H & I)**.

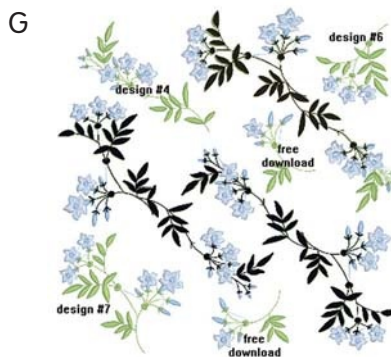
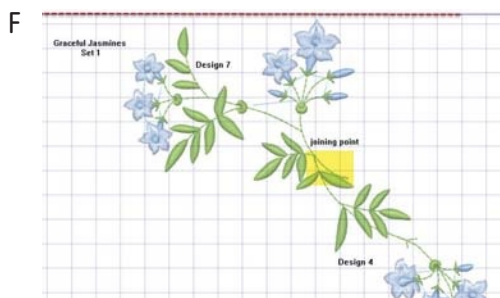
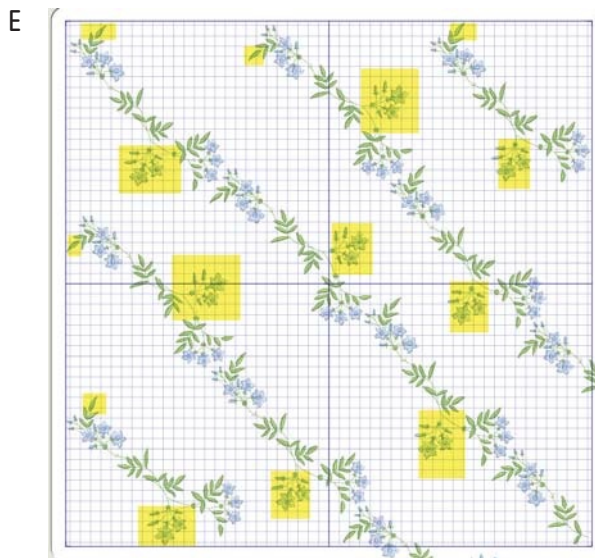
Keep in mind that the designs don't necessarily need to touch each other. Designs can be placed in a random manner in a given space to cover the fabric or in a continuous open design. Consider layering an embroidered sheer fabric over a solid embroidered fabric to achieve the full overall effect. [i](#)

#### DESIGN

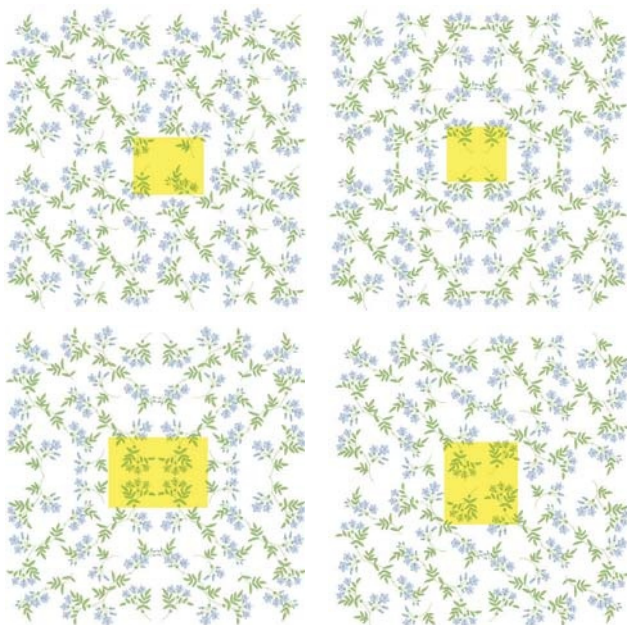
Flower designs: Graceful Jasmines by Graceful Embroidery; [gracefulembroidery.com](http://gracefulembroidery.com)

#### SOURCE

Husqvarna-Viking Ultra Premier+™ embroidery software was used throughout this article: [husqvarnaviking.com](http://husqvarnaviking.com)



H

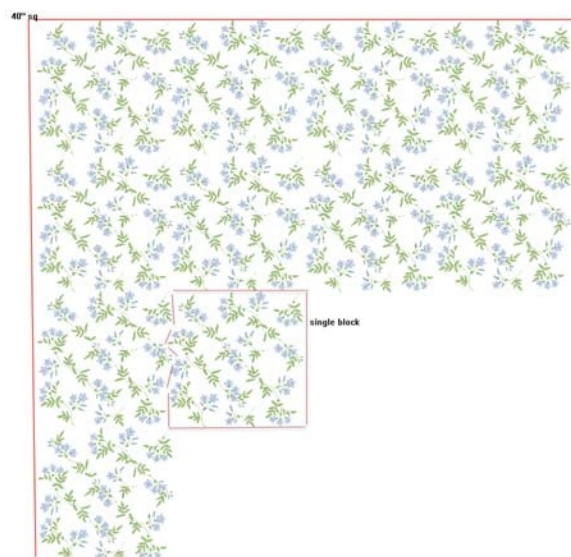


Centered highlighted areas display the easiest comparisons.

## DESIGN YOUR OWN

Although there are no set rules for creating your own embroidered fabric, the following guidelines can be helpful:

1. Consider the size and area that needs to be covered for the intended project.
2. Select an embroidery collection that offers a good number of smaller, compatible elements.
3. Experiment. Save what works, even if it's just in part, under a new file name and preserve the original design files for future projects.
4. When covering spacious areas, begin with the larger design, filling in any negative spaces with smaller elements.
5. Be willing to try and fail, and try again.





## Mini Purse

BY LISA ARCHER

Make a lovely purse for proms, weddings or any other occasion using specialty fabric such as satin, brocade, tulle or chiffon.



**Download the free ITH Mini-Purse** design from [cmemag.com/freebies](http://cmemag.com/freebies) until Apr. 30, 2017. Find the design at [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com) after the expiration date.



**T**HIS FAST AND EASY purse is perfect for special occasions. Experiment with different specialty fabrics to create your own unique bag. Crepe and sparkly tulle were used for the sample, and the results are stunning. To use both fabrics, simply layer the pieces together as one in each step where tulle is used — in this case, the flap and bag back.

## MATERIALS

- + ¼ yard opaque special occasion fabric (such as crepe, satin or brocade)
- + ¼ yard sheer embellished fabric (such as tulle or chiffon) (optional)
- + ¼ yard mediumweight fusible woven interfacing
- + 16" of coordinating cord or ribbon
- + Cut-away mesh stabilizer
- + 5x7 or larger hoop
- + Embroidery tape
- + Non-fusible permanent seam tape

## PREPARE

- Download the ITH Mini Purse design at [cmemag.com/freebies](http://cmemag.com/freebies). Transfer the design to the machine.
- From the main fabric, cut two 5"x8" rectangles, two 6"x8" rectangles and one 8"x12" rectangle.
- If using the optional sheer fabric, cut one 5"x8" rectangle and one 6"x8" rectangle.
- From the interfacing, cut two 5"x8" rectangles and three 6"x8" rectangles.
- Following the manufacturer's instructions, fuse the corresponding interfacing pieces to the wrong sides of the 5"x8" and 6"x8" main fabric rectangles.
- Press the 8"x12" rectangle in half widthwise with wrong sides together. Open the fold and slide the last 6"x8" interfacing piece against the fold. Fuse.





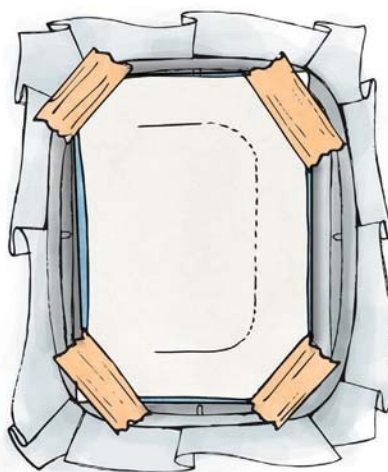
## EMBROIDER

*Note: This project is embroidered in two hoopings. The first creates the flap, and the second creates the rest of the purse.*

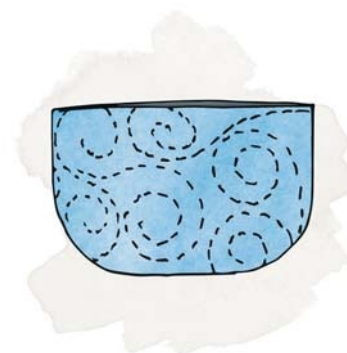
- Load the flap design onto the embroidery machine.
- Hoop a piece of stabilizer and place the hoop onto the machine.
- Stitch step one to create a placement line on the stabilizer.
- Center one 5"x8" rectangle right side up over the placement line, covering all the stitches. If using optional sheer fabric, layer the 5"x8" sheer rectangle right side up over the main fabric, treating the two as one piece. Tape in place. Center the other 5"x8" rectangle right side down on top. Tape in place.
- Embroider step two to stitch the flap **(A)**.
- Remove the project from the hoop. Trim around the stitching, leaving a 1/2" seam allowance. Clip the curves, turn and press. Set the flap aside **(B)**.
- Load the purse design onto the machine.
- Hoop a piece of stabilizer and place the hoop onto the machine.
- Stitch step one to create a placement line.
- Center one 6"x8" rectangle right side up over the placement line. If using optional sheer fabric, layer the 6"x8" sheer rectangle right side up over the main fabric, treating the two as one piece. Tape in place.
- Stitch step two to tack down the fabric.
- Stitch step three to create two small placement lines.




A

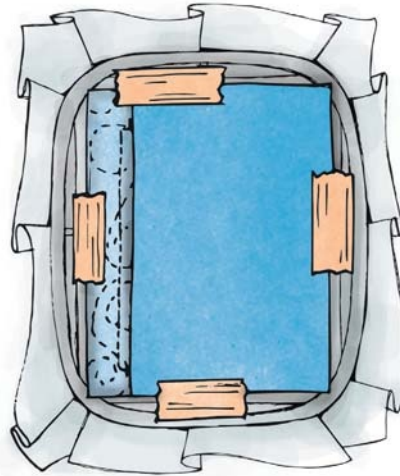


B

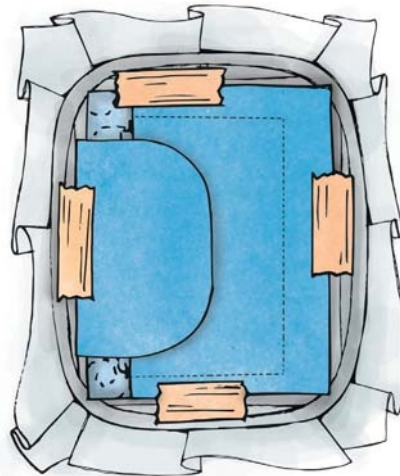


- Center the folded 8"x12" rectangle over the project, aligning the fold with the placement lines. Tape in place **(C)**.
- Embroider step four to stitch down the fabric.
- Place the completed flap right side down over the project with the open end overlapping the left stitching line by 1" and the curve toward the center of the hoop **(D)**.
- Place one cord end against the flap left edge with the length extending over the project center. Tape the end in place outside the stitch line. Repeat with the other cord end, placing it to the flap right side. Tape in place outside the stitch line. Fold the length of the cord to the project center and tape in place **(E)**.
- Embroider step five to stitch down the flap and cord.
- Center the remaining 6"x8" rectangle over the project, right side down. Tape in place.
- Stitch step six to complete the purse.
- Remove the project from the hoop. Trim around the project, leaving a 1/2" seam allowance. Clip the corners.
- Turn the project right side out through the opening. Turn in the open seam and use permanent seam tape to close the opening.
- Turn the pocket to the back of the project; press to complete. 

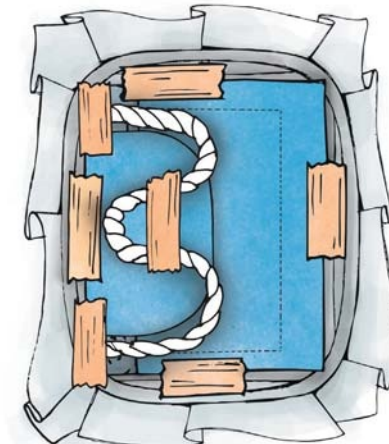
C



D



E



#### DESIGN

Mini Purse: Download the ITH Mini Purse free from [cmemag.com/freebies](http://cmemag.com/freebies) until Apr. 30, 2017. Purchase the design at [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com) after the expiration date.



# Rustic Revival

BY PAMELA COX

Bring the look of embellished leather into your home décor. Learn tips and techniques for embroidering on leather while stitching an elegant pillow.



Leather is not as difficult to stitch on as you might imagine. However, understanding its characteristics is the key to success. Just as there are many types of fabrics to choose from, there are many variations in leather with regard to weight, feel and texture, depending on how it has been tanned and processed.

Leather, unlike fabric, has no “memory.” Most fabric can be stretched or penetrated with a needle, later relaxing back into its natural state. This is not true of leather. All holes, whether they are created from the sewing needle or pins, will remain visible.

There are many embroidery designs specifically digitized for stitching on leather. These designs pay special attention to starting and ending points as well as necessary jump stitches to minimize the holes that are punched in the leather.

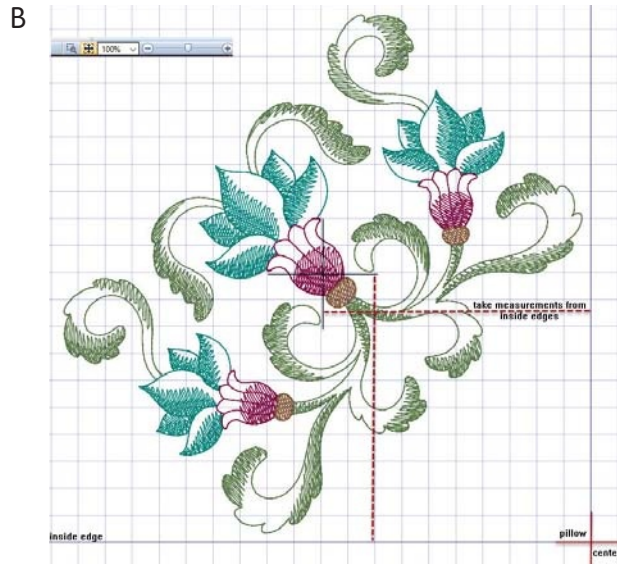
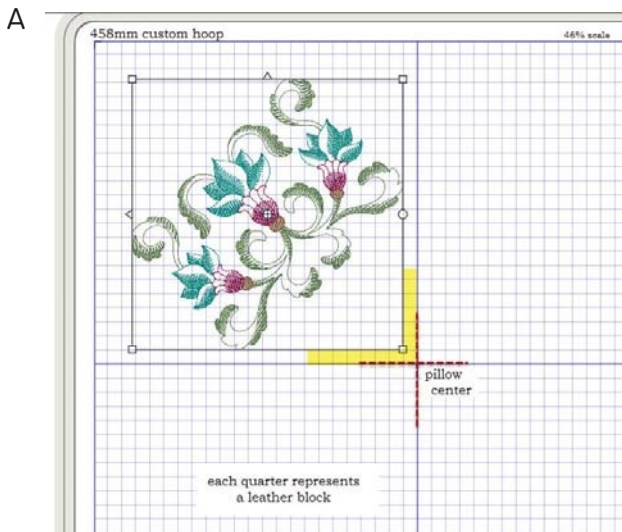
As a general guide, avoid filled designs that place finishing stitches close together and incorporate underlay stitches. Because the needle cuts through the leather, dense stitches will greatly weaken or ruin it. Outline embroidery designs use fewer stitches and tend to reuse the same holes. Greeting card or paper designs, if digitized properly, can also be used for leather, since paper and leather share the common need to avoid unnecessary stitches.



## MATERIALS

- + Leather: enough to cut four 9½” squares
- + 18½” square of suede fabric
- + Two 1½” buttons with a shank
- + Thread: 40-wt rayon embroidery & polyester sewing
- + Needles: 90/14 leather, 80/12 microfiber & 90/14 microfiber
- + Stabilizer: mediumweight self-adhesive tear-away & light- or mediumweight cut-away
- + Rotary cutting system
- + Embroidery software
- + 20” pillow form or fiberfill
- + Painter’s tape
- + Removable fabric marker (optional)
- + Rectangular embroidery design appropriate for leather (approximately 5¾”x8¾”; see “Design.”)





## PREPARE

- Open an 18" square custom hoop; each quarter of the hoop will represent a pillow block.
- Load the design onto the machine. Rotate it counterclockwise 45° and use the gridlines as a guide to place the design into the upper left quadrant, aligning the design with the quadrant lower and right edges, at least  $\frac{3}{8}$ " from the edge (**A**).
- Use the software's grid function to measure the distance to the design center from the right and lower quadrant edges (**B**). Designate this measurement as the distance from the edge. Designate the lower right corner as the inner corner.
- Save the rotated design under a new file name, preserving the original for future projects. Transfer the design to the embroidery machine.
- With a rotary cutter, cut four  $9\frac{1}{2}$ " squares from the leather.

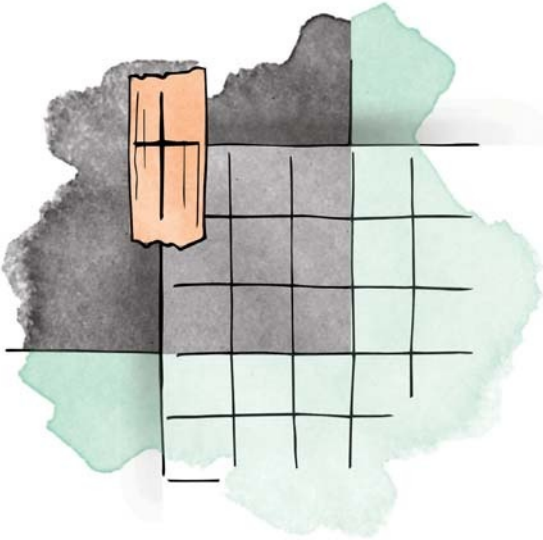
## EMBROIDER

- Mark four 2" strips of painter's tape with a plus sign. Find the design center on each leather square by measuring the distance from the edge on two adjacent sides and marking the point where the lines meet with the painter's tape cross marks (**C**).
- Layer a piece of self-adhesive tear-away stabilizer over a piece of cut-away stabilizer; hoop both pieces together. Use a pin to score the paper inside the hoop. Peel up the paper to reveal the sticky surface.
- Place the leather on the stabilizer, centering the cross marks in the hoop. Press to secure.
- Install a leather needle into the machine, then place the hoop onto the machine. Adjust the needle if necessary to make sure it aligns with the cross marks, then carefully remove the painter's tape.

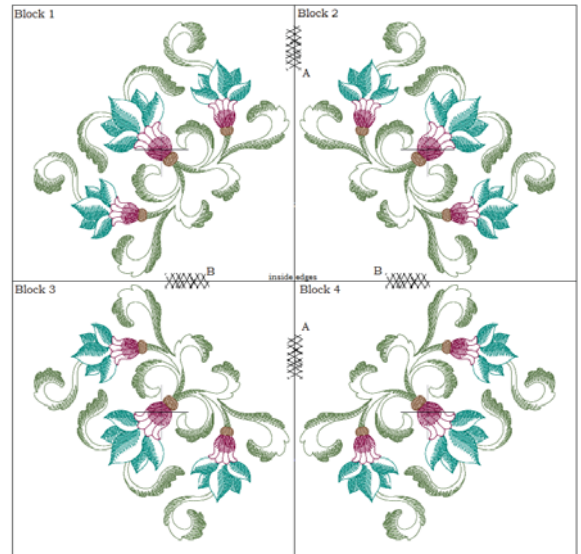
*Tip*

Save scraps of self-adhesive stabilizer to assist with piecing the pillow.

C



D



- Slow the machine down to at least quarter speed and embroider the design.
- Remove the hoop from the machine and unhoop. Trim the cut-away stabilizer close to the stitching. Gently tear away the self-adhesive stabilizer, starting from the outer corners of the design. In this case, it is not necessary to remove all the stabilizer; remove what you can and leave the rest.
- Repeat to embroider three more leather squares.

## CONSTRUCT

- Position the four embroidered squares into a larger square with each inner corner toward the square center (**D**). Re-cut the inside edges of each block  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the design outer edge.
- Choose a decorative machine stitch that applies equal stitches to both sides of a butted seam. Test the

## BETTER IN LEATHER

### Use these tips for leather embroidering success.

- As a leather needle is needed to sew leather, they are also recommended for embroidering on leather. Select the needle size appropriate to the weight of the leather: soft, supple leather will need a smaller gauge, while thick, stiff leather will need a stronger, larger needle.
- Leather cannot be secured directly in the frame of an embroidery hoop. This is partly because of the material's thickness, but also because the pressure of the hoop would scar the leather. To embroider, float the leather on self-adhesive paper-backed stabilizer.
- A special foot is not necessary, because during the embroidery process, the presser foot floats above the material being embroidered. However, during the piecing phase of this project, use a Teflon foot that will glide over the leather.
- Leather cannot be ironed, as heat will mark the surface and/or change the texture. If other fabric within the project requires pressing, protect leather pieces by covering them with a press cloth to prevent steam from discoloring or leaving a water stain.





stitch on a few leather scraps before making a final choice.

- Score a 2" strip of self-adhesive stabilizer lengthwise down the middle and remove the paper from one side only. Place one inside edge of a square along this line and press to secure. Remove the rest of the paper and place the corresponding side of an adjacent leather square against it **(E)**.
- Install a Teflon presser foot onto the machine. Stitch the butted seam using a decorative joining stitch, rayon thread and the leather needle.
- Repeat to stitch the other two squares together.
- Repeat to stitch all four pieces together.
- Trim the large square so it measures 18", cutting the same amount from each edge.
- Divide the suede cloth fabric into quarters; mark with a basting line

or removable fabric marker. Install an 80/12 microfiber needle into the machine and stitch a decorative stitch over the basting lines.

- Trim the fabric so it measures 18" square, cutting the same amount from each edge.
- With right sides facing and a ½" seam allowance, a 90/14 microfiber needle and polyester thread, stitch the front and back together. Leave an opening on one edge for turning.
- Turn the pillow right side out. Insert the pillow form or stuff with fiberfill. Hand stitch the opening closed.
- Stitch the buttons in place by lacing one into the other, pulling each one toward the other so the pillow sinks in the middle. ⓘ

#### DESIGN

Floral design: Embroidery Library, Sheer Floral Rectangle; [www.emblibrary.com](http://www.emblibrary.com).

E



### STABLE STITCHING



Worried about the stability of your joining stitches? Here are a few ways to make the seam more stable.

For additional security, add a strip of cut-away stabilizer underneath the self-adhesive stabilizer, allowing it to become a part of the joining process. Make sure the layer lays smooth on the bottom during the stitching process.

Another method is to use a strip of leather under the joining seam, with rough sides facing. While stitching, keep both sides butted against each other and the leather joining strip flat.



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# 4 Corners *Convertible* Tote

Make a roomy canvas bag with a tapestry-inspired panel to coordinate with your spring wardrobe. Adjustable straps allow you to carry the bag as a backpack, shoulder or cross-body purse, or use the handle and carry it as a large tote.

BY STACY SCHLYER

## MATERIALS

*Supplies listed are enough to make one 2½"x13"x15" bag.*

- + 2 yards of canvas fabric
- + 1 yard of cotton fabric (lining)
- + 1½ to 2 yards of ¾" - to 7⁄8"-wide tapestry ribbon
- + 3 yards of woven interfacing
- + 2½" x 13" scrap of thick fusible polyester interfacing (optional)
- + Two adjustable sliders
- + Six 1" D-rings
- + Four 1" swivel snap hooks or lobster clasps with D-rings attached
- + Two magnetic snaps
- + Thread: embroidery & coordinating all-purpose
- + Cut-away stabilizer
- + Removable fabric marker
- + Square and corner embroidery designs (approximately 5.87" square and 3.85"x3.85"; see "Designs.")

## CUT

- From the canvas, cut one 9" square for the central square motif; four 9½" squares for the corner motifs; two 2"x12" rectangles, one 2"x14" rectangle and one 3½"x14" rectangle for the front flap panel; one 4"x18" rectangle for the D-rings; one 4"x12" rectangle for the bag handle; two 4"x50" rectangles for the straps; two 14"x16" rectangles for the bag body; two 3½"x16" rectangles for the bag sides and one 3½"x14" rectangle for the bag base. Label all canvas pattern pieces.

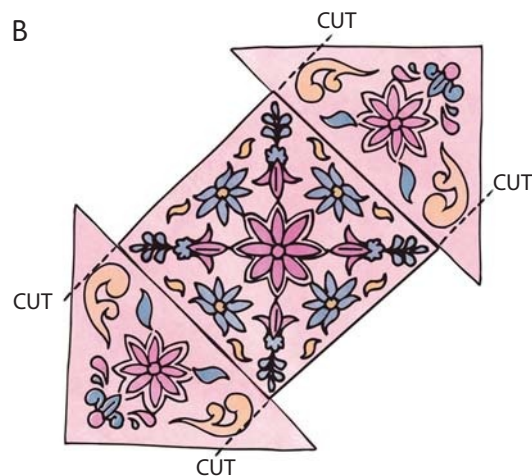
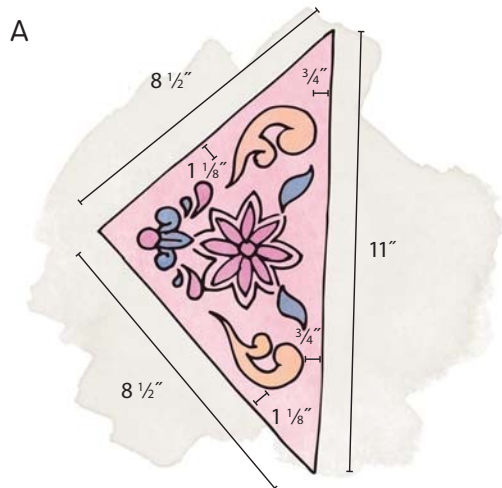
- From the lining fabric, cut one 14"x15¼" rectangle for the flap lining, one 10"x12" rectangle for the interior pocket; two 14"x16" rectangles for the lining body; two 3½"x16" rectangles for the lining sides and one 3½"x14" rectangle for the lining base. Label all lining pattern pieces.
- From the interfacing, cut one 12" square for the embroidered panel; two 2"x12" rectangles, one 2"x14" rectangle and one 3½"x14" rectangle for the embroidered panel flap; one 14"x15¼" rectangle for the flap lining; four 14"x16" rectangles for bag and lining body; four 3½"x16"

rectangles for the bag and lining sides and two 3½"x14" rectangles for bag and lining base.

- Fuse the interfacing to the wrong side of each canvas and lining piece following the manufacturer's directions, except for the 12" square for the embroidered panel. Note that the straps, handle, D-ring rectangle and interior pocket will not be interfaced. If using thick fusible interfacing for added structure and support on the bag base, fuse it to the canvas wrong side and add the additional interfacing layer on top.







## EMBROIDER

*Note: The square embroidery design has been reduced to 5½" square and the corner embroidery design has been increased to 4"x4¼" to form a perfect square when pieced.*

- Load the designs onto the embroidery machine. Adjust the sizes as needed so that when pieced together, the square and corner designs form a perfect square.
- Center and embroider the square design onto the 9" canvas square.
- Center and embroider the corner design onto one 9½" canvas square. Repeat to stitch a total of four squares.

## CONSTRUCT

*Use ¼" seam allowances to construct the embroidered panel and ½" seam allowances for the bag construction unless otherwise noted.*

- Cut around the square embroidery, leaving a ¾" border and centering

the design. The square should measure approximately 7".

- Cut around each corner embroidery, leaving ¾" along the long edge and 1⅛" along each shorter side edge **(A)**. The triangle should measure 8½"x8½"x11". Repeat for the remaining corner motifs.

*Tip*

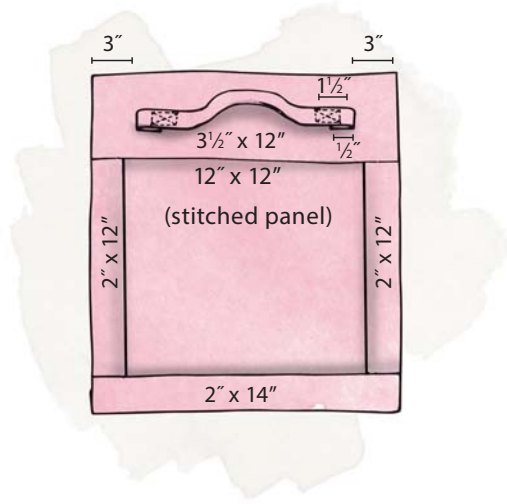
Create a template for the triangle pieces for accurate and consistent sizing.

- Center a triangle on opposite edges of the square; stitch in place. To reduce bulk, trim the points from the triangles in line with the square's straight edge **(B)**.
- Center the two remaining triangles along the remaining square edges; stitch in place. Don't worry if the

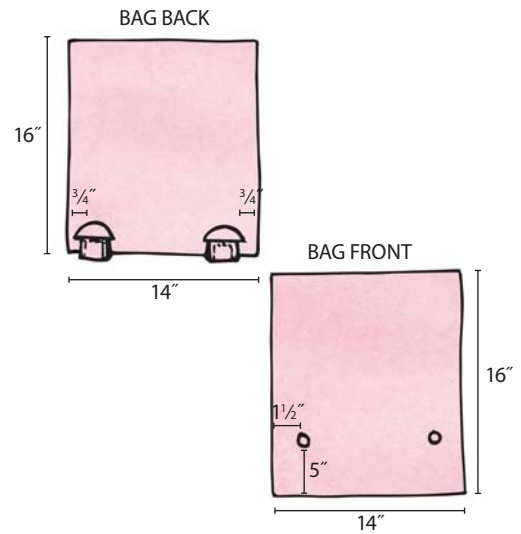
triangles are slightly short, as the panel will be squared up in a later step.

- Center tapestry ribbon over the seams. Edgestitch both sides of the ribbon in place.
- Trim the pieced panel to 12" square, ensuring the design is centered. Fuse the 12" square of interfacing to the panel back following the manufacturer's instructions.
- Stitch one 2"x12" strip to each embroidered panel side edge. Press the seams toward the strips and topstitch.
- Stitch one 2"x14" strip to the embroidered panel lower edge. Press the seams toward the strip and topstitch.
- Stitch one 3½"x14" strip to the embroidered panel upper edge. Press the seams toward the strip and topstitch.
- Fold the 4"x12" handle rectangle in half lengthwise, wrong sides together. Open the rectangle and

C



D



fold the raw edges in to meet at the crease. Re-fold and topstitch along each edge.

- Fold each handle end under  $\frac{1}{2}$ ", creating a finished edge. Center the handle on the upper strip. Pin the handle 3" away from the panel side edges. Stitch close to the pressed edge and again  $\frac{1}{2}$ " away. Reinforce the handle by stitching an X in the middle of the square **(C)**.
- Following the manufacturer's instructions, attach the male snaps  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " in from the lower and side edge on the front flap lining rectangle (14"x15 $\frac{1}{4}$ " rectangle).
- With right sides together, stitch the flap lining and embroidered panel together, making sure that the snaps are at the flap lower edge and the handle is at the top and leaving the upper edge unstitched. Clip the corners, turn right side out and topstitch close to the finished edges. If desired, baste the raw upper edges of the flap together. Set aside.

- Fold the 4"x18" D-ring rectangle in half lengthwise, wrong sides together. Open the rectangle and fold the raw edges in to meet at the crease. Re-fold and topstitch along each edge. Cut into six 3" segments. Slip a D-ring through each segment, fold in half and baste the raw edges together.

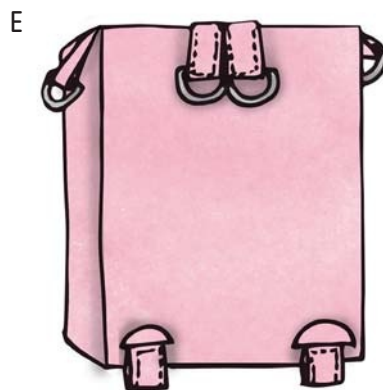
- Following the manufacturer's instructions, add female snaps to the bag front lower edge,  $1\frac{1}{2}$ " from each side and 5" up from the lower edge. Place two D-rings along the lower edge of the bag back,  $\frac{3}{4}$ " away from each side. Match the raw edges and baste in place **(D)**.








- Stitch the short end of the bag sides to each end of the bag base.
- Stitch the joined strip to the bag front with right sides together, pivoting at the seams. Clip the corners; press. Repeat to attach the strip to the bag back, and turn bag right side out.
- Attach a D-ring to each bag side, matching the raw edges. Baste in place. Find the center of the bag back, mark and place the remaining two D-ring segments on either side of this mark; baste in place **(E)**.
- With right sides together, baste the flap to the bag back. Set aside.
- Fold the pocket in half with right sides together so that it measures 6"x10". Stitch the sides and the lower edge, leaving a 3" opening for turning. Clip the corners and turn right side out. If desired, topstitch 1" from the folded edge.
- Attach the pocket to the lining back so the pocket lower edge is centered 3½" from the lining back lower edge. Edgestitch the sides and lower edge. Stitch again 1" from the pocket right edge to create a pen slot.
- Construct the lining following the steps for the bag exterior, leaving a 5" to 6" opening along one edge for turning.



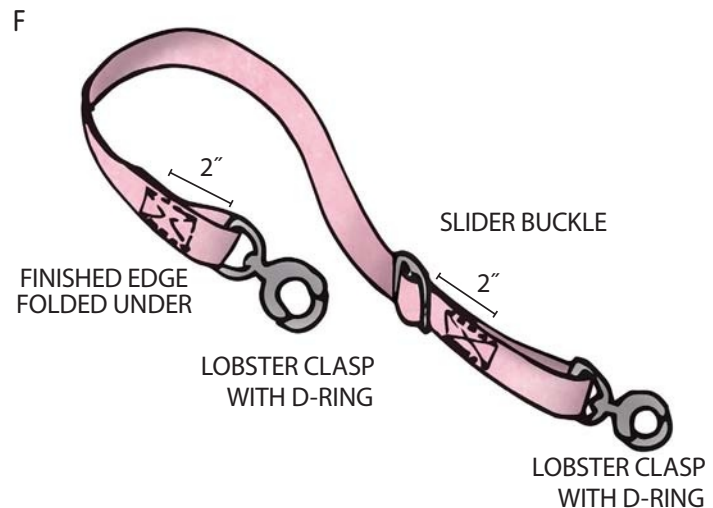


## FINISH

- With right sides together, place the bag inside the lining. Stitch around the bag upper edge.
- Turn the bag right side out through the lining opening.
- Topstitch the bag upper edge, keeping the flap free from stitching.
- Slipstitch the lining opening closed.
- Fold each strap in half lengthwise with wrong sides together. Open the rectangle and fold the raw edges in to meet at the crease. Re-fold and topstitch along each edge.
- Fold one strap end under  $\frac{1}{2}$ ", thread the strap 2" through a lobster clasp and stitch the folded end to the strap. Stitch again 1" away and secure by making an X in the middle of the square.
- Slide the other strap end through the slider buckle and another lobster clasp, bring the strap end back up through the buckle and thread it through the slider bar, under the existing strap. Fold under the raw edge and stitch the folded end of the strap to itself 2" away from the buckle (**F**). Stitch again 1" away and secure by making an X in the middle of the square. Repeat to create the remaining strap. 

## DESIGNS

Floral square and corners: Embroidery Library, Talavera Dahlia Square (5.87" square) & Talavera Dahlia Corner (3.85"x3.85"); emblibrary.com.







# Sheer Factor *Capelet*

BY MICHELE MISHLER

Stitch up a whisper-soft capelet to create the perfect accessory for sheer, stylish coverage. Made up in a sheer silk voile with a classic embroidered scalloped border, this project features an easy pattern alteration technique for a basic jacket, bolero or open cardigan garment pattern.

Butterick B5529

## MATERIALS

- + 1½ yard of silk or cotton voile
- + ¼ yard silk shantung (54" wide)
- + Basic open-front cape or jacket pattern with dolman sleeves (such as Butterick B5529)
- + Thread: coordinating embroidery, bobbin & all-purpose
- + Water-soluble stabilizer
- + Pattern or tracing paper
- + 75/11 embroidery needle
- + Scallop embroidery design (approximately 3¼"x7¼"; see "Design.")

## ALTER

*Note: This project features Butterick B5529, View C.*

- Trace the pattern pieces onto new paper.
- On the jacket front, measure from the corner of the shoulder/neckline to the hemline of jacket C, keeping the ruler parallel to the grainline **(A)**. Using the corner as a pivot point, measure and mark that distance in intervals, creating a curve as you work toward the sleeve **(B)**. Trim along the hemline and newly marked curve.

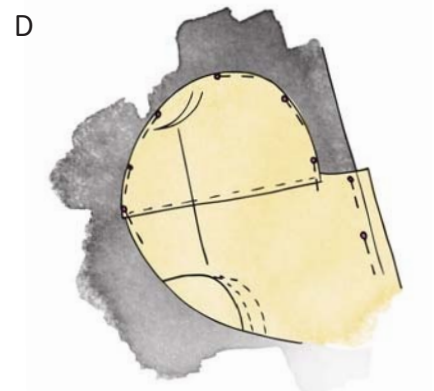
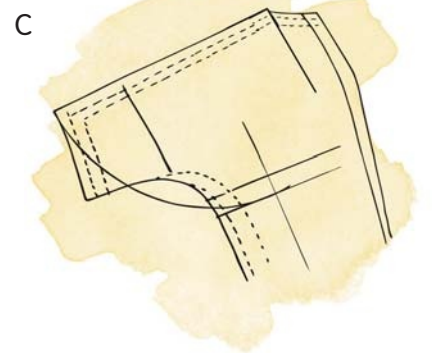
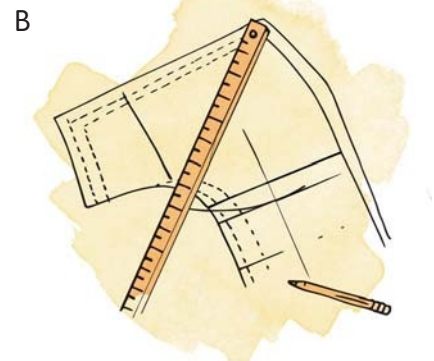
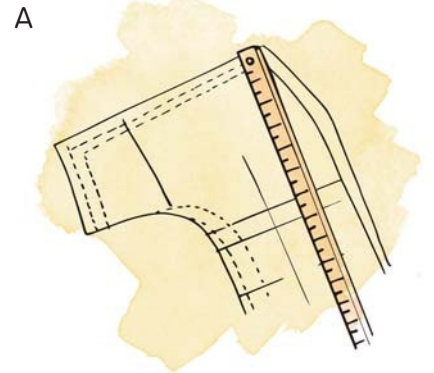
*Tip*

The sample garment was embroidered with the design rotated 90° in a large hoop.

- Mark the jacket back in a similar manner, using the edge of the back neckline as the pivot point. Add extra tissue paper to the underarm area of the jacket if needed to extend the curved line **(C)**. Trim along the hemline and newly marked curve.
- Overlap the two pattern pieces at the sleeve seam by 1¼", the width of two seam allowances; tape in place. Place the completed pattern on the folded length of fabric, with the center back along the fold. The seam allowance should overhang the fabric fold, eliminating the center-back seam **(D)**. Cut out the capelet.
- Cut the band pattern piece from the silk shantung, placing the center back on the fabric fold.

## EMBROIDER

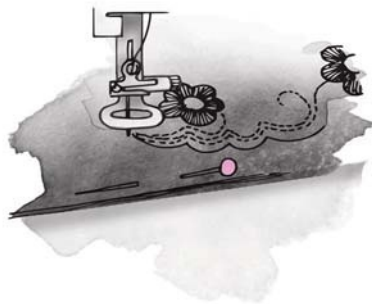
- Download the Scallop and End Scallop embroidery designs from [cmemag.com/freebies](http://cmemag.com/freebies) until April 30, 2017. The design will be available at [oregonpatchworks.com](http://oregonpatchworks.com) after the expiration date.
- Load the machine with matching embroidery and bobbin thread.
- Hoop a piece of water-soluble stabilizer. Place the hoop onto the machine. Stitch step one of the Scallop design to create the placement line. Position the capelet lower edge along the placement line, centering the capelet back and smoothing the excess fabric out of the way.
- Use the baste function to secure the fabric to the stabilizer. Skip step two for the time being; this planned color stop is designed to move the needle to the connection point to the right of the embroidery design.







E



- Stitch step three to complete the first scallop. Remove the hoop from the machine and trim the water-soluble stabilizer close to the embroidery.
- To work to the right, hoop water-soluble stabilizer. Place the hoop on the machine and stitch step one. Skip step two. The needle will move to the connection point on the left. Position the first embroidered scallop over the hoop with the needle aligned to the scallop right edge. Pivot the capelet so the fabric edge aligns with the placement line. Use the baste function to secure the fabric in position and stitch step three. Remove the hoop from the machine and trim the water-soluble stabilizer close to the embroidery. Repeat these steps to create a continuous scallop design, working from the center back toward the right capelet edge until there is not room enough for a complete scallop.
- To work to the left, hoop water-soluble stabilizer. Place the hoop on the machine and stitch step one. When the placement line is complete, the needle will move to the connection point on the right. Position the center-back scallop over the hoop with the needle aligned to the scallop left edge **(E)**. Pivot the capelet so that the edge of fabric aligns with the placement line. Use the baste function to secure the fabric in position. Skip step two and stitch step three. Remove the hoop from the machine and trim the water-soluble stabilizer close to the embroidery. Repeat these steps to create a continuous scallop design, working from the center back toward the left capelet edge until there is not room enough for a complete scallop.
- Use the Ending Scallop design to complete the embroidered edge.

## Tip

Water-soluble stabilizer comes in a variety of types. The sample garment was embroidered with a fibrous water-soluble stabilizer which is also available with a sticky surface. Test sew, using different stabilizer types, then wash and dry to see the results.

Step one is a planned color stop, designed to move the needle to the connection point to the right of the embroidery design. Use this needle position to connect the embroidery when working to the left. Skip step one and embroider step two.

- Step two moves the needle to the left. Use this needle position to connect the embroidery when working to the right. Embroider step two to complete the design.

## FINISH

- Trim the scalloped edge close to the satin stitching, leaving 1" at the front edges. Add the front band following the pattern instructions.
- Remove the water-soluble stabilizer according to the manufacturer's instructions. Trim the remaining hem edge close to the satin stitching. ⓘ



### DESIGN

Download the Scallop and Ending Scallop Embroidery Designs free from [cmemag.com/freebies](http://cmemag.com/freebies) until April 30, 2017. The design will be available at [oregonpatchworks.com](http://oregonpatchworks.com) after the expiration date.

### SOURCES

Butterick carries pattern B5529: [butterick.mccall.com](http://butterick.mccall.com).

Floriani carries Wet & Gone Stabilizer and 40-wt polyester embroidery thread: [floriani.com](http://floriani.com).



# Bee's Knees Skirt

BY KATRINA WALKER

Convert your favorite pencil skirt pattern into a faux wrap skirt featuring on-trend metallic bee embroidery and sparkling beadwork inspired by vintage Schiaparelli.

BurdaStyle #118 08/2015

*U*rap skirts are flattering, fun and on trend this spring. They create a great vertical line and provide a perfect place to show off a favorite embroidery design. Unfortunately, a true wrap skirt can be a bit tricky when in motion, especially on a breezy day! Luckily, it's very simple to convert your favorite pencil skirt pattern into a faux wrap skirt that has all the style and none of the inconvenience.

## MATERIALS

- + Pencil skirt pattern (such as BurdaStyle #118 08/2015)
- + Woven fabric (amount according to pattern envelope plus  $\frac{3}{4}$  yard)
- + Interfacing, zipper and other notions (according to pattern envelope)
- + Lightweight cut-away mesh stabilizer
- + Gold and black metallic embroidery thread
- + Pattern or tracing paper
- + Ruler
- + Removable fabric marker
- + Bee embroidery design (approximately 1"x1½"; see "Design.")

### For optional beadwork:

*Materials listed are enough to make three starburst patterns and nine miniature bees.*

- + Pre-waxed synthetic beading thread
- + Beading needle

- + 24 long gold bugle beads or 48 regular bugle beads
- + 24 silver bugle beads
- + 75 gold seed beads
- + 48 silver seed beads
- + 48 mixed silver and gold seed beads

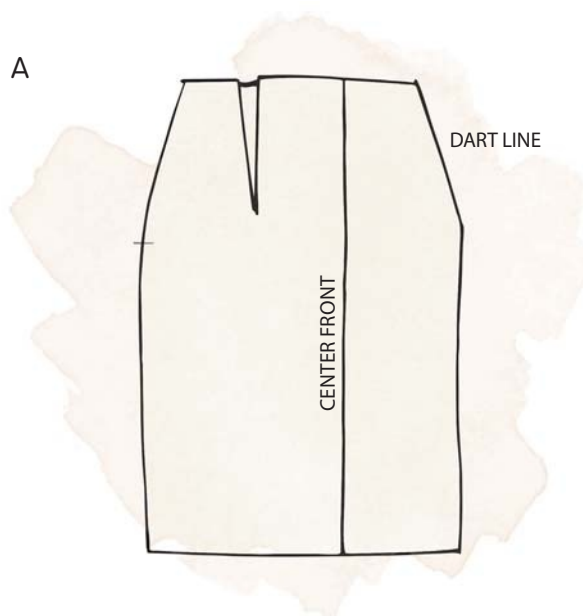
## PREPARE

*Note: "Left" and "right" in the instructions refer to the final location when garment is worn.*

- Mark the pattern piece cutting lines for your size with a colored pen.
- Trace the skirt front and back patterns onto tracing or pattern paper. If using a BurdaStyle pattern, add  $\frac{5}{8}$ " seam allowances and a 2" hem to the traced pattern. Check the pattern fit and adjust if needed. Mark any pattern adjustments made on the original pattern pieces.
- Using the skirt front pattern, trace the right front half onto the tracing paper, marking the foldline. Set the tracing paper aside.







- Using the pattern dart lines and a ruler, trace a line from the waistline down to the hem along the centermost dart line for your size. The line should curve along the dart line and then fall parallel to the grainline down to the hem.
- Turn the tracing paper over and align the traced center foldline with the center line on the pattern. Trace the second half of the pattern onto the paper, using the new line you have drawn as the left edge. Designate the new pattern piece the faux wrap **(A)**.
- Cut two skirt backs, one skirt front on the fold and one faux wrap. Set aside fabric for a waistband.

## EMBROIDER

- Download the Irresistible Insects bee design from [cmemag.com/freebies](http://cmemag.com/freebies) until Apr. 30, 2017. Find the design after the expiration date, and the rest

of the collection, at [shopsewital.com](http://shopsewital.com).

- Mark the stitching line and hemline on the right side of the faux wrap lower right corner using a removable fabric marker.



Print templates of the design to find the perfect spot for each bee.

- Determine the desired placement for the three bee motifs, keeping them within an approximately 4"x4" square with the hemline and stitching line you marked slightly outside the border. Mark the desired placement with cross marks using a removable fabric marker. Alternatively, design the placement on the machine or embroidery software by copying

the design and placing each bee as desired within the field.

- Hoop the area to be embroidered with two layers of lightweight cut-away stabilizer. Place the hoop onto the machine.
- Align the needle with one set of cross marks (or with the center of the embroidery field if embroidering three bees at once) and embroider the design, using metallic black for color 1 and metallic gold for color 2.
- Repeat to embroider the other two bees.
- Remove the hoop from the machine and the fabric from the hoop. Cut away the stabilizer close to the stitching lines.
- Hand embroider with beads if desired; see page 53 for templates and instructions for creating the beaded motifs.

For tips on embroidering with metallic threads, check out Episode 8 of Absolute Beginner Machine Embroidery, available at [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com).

## IRRESISTIBLE INSECTS COLLECTION

These are the kind of bugs you want in your house! These perfectly playful critters will add a touch of whimsy to garments or home décor. Choose from an ant, bee, beetle, butterfly, dragonfly, grasshopper or get them all in one collection. Find the Irresistible Insects designs at [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com).



Dragonfly



Beetle



Ant



Butterfly

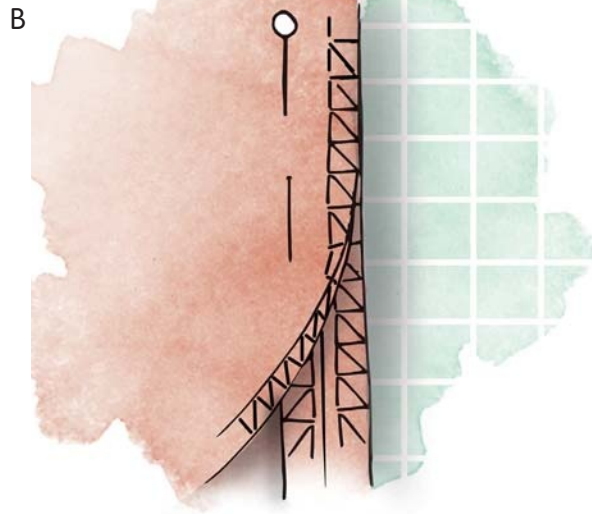


Bee




Grasshopper





## CONSTRUCT

- Stitch the front and back darts and press toward the center.
- Move the zipper insertion from the skirt side seam to the center-back seam. Insert the zipper according to the pattern instructions; stitch the center-back seam and the skirt-back slit as instructed. Finish the seam allowances.
- Stitch the skirt front to the left side seam of the skirt back and the faux wrap to the right side seam of the skirt back. Finish the seam allowances.
- Overlap the skirt front with the faux wrap to check the fit. The side edge of the faux wrap should extend  $\frac{5}{8}$ " past the left dart line. Adjust the fit if necessary.
- To finish the raw side edges of the skirt front and the faux wrap, fold  $\frac{1}{4}$ " toward the wrong side; press. Turn the folded edge toward the wrong side again. Press, then edgestitch to create a  $\frac{1}{4}$ "-wide hemmed edge.
- Turn up the hem, press and hem the skirt according to the pattern instructions.
- Pin the open side edge of the skirt front to the side-seam seam allowance of the faux wrap, overlapping and butting the finished edge of the skirt front against the seam **(B)**. Topstitch the skirt front onto the seam allowance, ending 3" below the widest part of the hip. Use a bar tack or similar reinforcement stitch to secure the bottom of the topstitched seam.
- Align the top edge of the faux wrap with the skirt front so that it lies smoothly with the edge aligned with the left side dart. Baste the faux wrap edge to secure in place.
- Measure the waistline of the skirt. Cut a waistband according to the pattern instructions that is at least 2" longer than the measurement. Interface the waistband and apply according to the pattern instructions. Finish with a hook and eye or similar notion. 

### DESIGN

Bee: CME, Irresistible Insects Embroidery  
Design Collection: [shopsewital.com](http://shopsewital.com).

## BUSY BEE-ADWORK

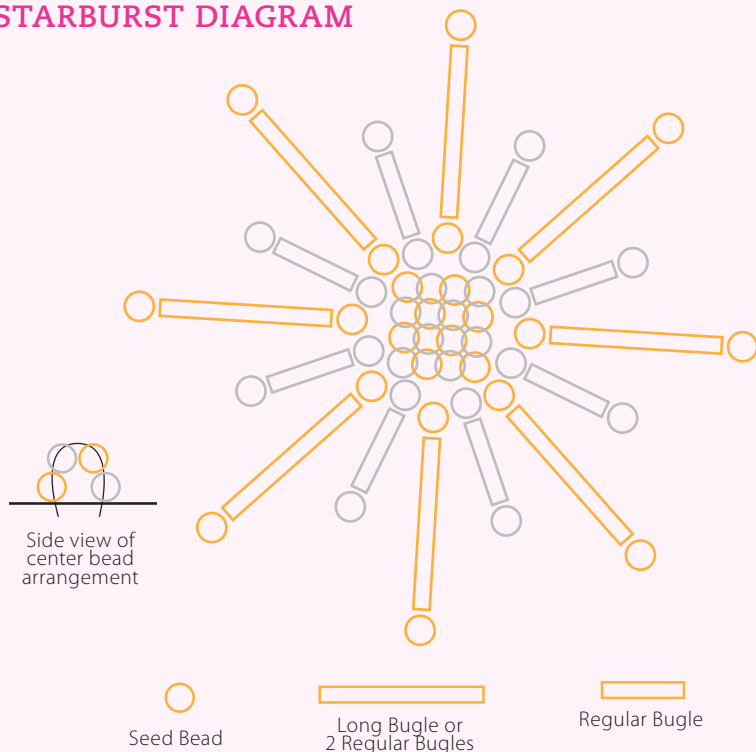
Add extra sparkle to your embellished skirt. Following the instructions below, stitch starbursts and tiny beaded "bees."

*Note: For a list of materials needed, see the beginning of the project.*

### STARBURST

- Thread the beading needle. Knot the end of the thread and insert the beading needle into the fabric from the wrong side at the desired starting point.
- Add four mixed-color seed beads to the needle and slide them down the thread.
- Reinsert the needle about two seed-bead widths from the original entry point. The beads will form an arc.
- Repeat three times as shown in the diagram to create the starburst center.
- Starting with the needle inserted from the back at the top of the starburst center, create gold rays by placing one gold seed bead, one gold long bugle bead (or two standard-length gold bugle beads), and one seed bead on the needle and sliding onto the thread.
- Reinsert the needle so that the beads lie flat and straight, pointing directly away from the center.
- Repeat to create eight rays evenly spaced around the starburst center according to the diagram.
- Starting with the needle inserted from back of fabric, stitch a silver ray in the same manner in between adjacent gold rays, according to the diagram.
- Once the design is completed, knot the thread securely on the back of the fabric.

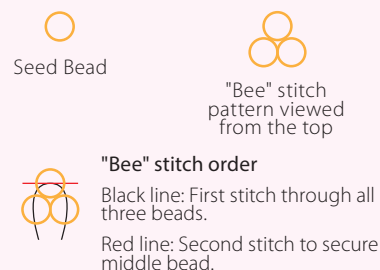
### STARBURST DIAGRAM



### BEE

- Thread the beading needle. Knot the end of the thread and insert the beading needle into the fabric from the wrong side at the desired starting point.
- Add three seed beads to the needle and slide them down thread into position.
- Insert the needle back into the fabric close to the original stitch entry and gently pull taut. The middle bead will pop upward.
- Pull the needle through the fabric from the wrong side close to the previous stitches. Pass the needle through the middle bead.
- Finish the stitch near the entry point, and knot off on the back of the fabric. Catch a few threads of fabric weave when knotting off to create a more secure knot.

### BEE DIAGRAM





# Critter Collective

BY KATE ZAYNARD

Stitch a set of irresistibly cute insect-embellished tea towels for your kitchen.

**BONUS  
PROJECT!**





## MATERIALS

Materials listed are enough to make one 20"x28" tea towel.

- + 20"x28" tea towel blank (See "Source.")
- + Mediumweight cut-away stabilizer or cut-away paper-backed self-adhesive stabilizer
- + Embroidery thread
- + Insect embroidery designs, approximately 1½" x 1¼" (dragonfly), ¾" x 1½" (grasshopper) and ½" x 1" (ant) (See "Designs.")

## PREPARE

- Print as many templates of the design as desired. Audition the designs on the towel blank, pinning or otherwise attaching the templates in place.
- Mark the placements of the designs with cross marks.
- Load the design onto the machine.

## EMBROIDER

- Hoop the towel blank with a piece of mediumweight cut-away stabilizer; if using multiple copies of the design, try to fit as many into a single hooping as possible. Or, if the design will be placed near the edge, hoop a piece of cut-away paper-backed self-adhesive stabilizer with the paper facing up. Score the paper



Use a frame from your machine or embroidery software to emphasize the design. We adjusted the size of three circles to evoke ripples on a pond.



We used the plaid pattern on the towel to help line up the designs.



Neatly trim the threads and stabilizer on the back so when it shows, it looks just as good as the front.

## DRAWING A BLANK



Tea towel blanks are perfect for this quick project, but it's easy to make them from scratch.


- Cut a piece of cotton fabric into a 21½"x29½" rectangle.
- Turn each long edge a scant ⅜" toward the wrong side; press.
- Turn the folded edges ⅜" toward the wrong side a second time; press and topstitch in place.
- Repeat to hem the short edges.
- You can embroider before or after hemming, but if you embroider before, make sure to leave at least 1" from each edge clear of embroidery.



## Tip

Use matching thread in the bobbin to ensure the towel looks almost as good from the back as from the front.

with a pin and peel away the paper inside the hoop. Position the towel blank in the hoop and press gently to secure.

- Place the hoop into the machine. Position the needle over the cross marks and embroider the design.
- If embroidering more than one copy of the design, move the needle to the next set of cross marks and embroider the design.
- Repeat as desired to stitch more copies, re-hooping as necessary.
- Remove the hoop from the machine and unhoop the towel. Cut the extra stabilizer away from the designs, leaving about ¼" of stabilizer around the stitching. 

### DESIGNS

Ant, Dragonfly & Grasshopper: CME, Irresistible Insects Embroidery Design Collection: shopse-witall.com.

### SOURCE

Dunroven House carries Creekside Towels in Lime Green/White, Orange/White and Turquoise/White: dunrovenhouse.com.

## THE ANTS GO MARCHING



To form a line of ants, create a grouping of individual designs on the machine and stitch it as one design. This can be done using embroidery software as well.

- Load the ant design onto the machine or into the software and open it.
- Make several copies of the design; more copies can be made if necessary.
- Set the machine or software to show the hoop borders. Place the first ant as near the border as possible.
- Lay out the line, placing one ant after the next. To curve the line, rotate the design 1°-10° at a time

until the angle looks good. Rotate the next ant more and so on to get an aesthetically appealing curve.

- Continue the line to the edge of the towel, making more copies as needed.

*Note: To ensure proper positioning, it may be helpful to set the alignment point to one of the edges or corners of the design field.*

- If designing on the machine, hoop the fabric using cut-away paper-backed self-adhesive stabilizer and proceed to the embroidering stage. If using embroidery software, save the design as a separate file and transfer it to the machine.

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MARTHA PULLEN

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# Pretty in Paris

BY STACY SCHLYER

Bring a bit of Parisian romance into your home by sewing up a whimsical table runner.



## WATCH IT!

This design is based on Sis Boom's Peggy Party Runner pattern. Find the video and kit at [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com).



## MATERIALS

- +  $\frac{1}{8}$  yard of 43"- to 45"-wide quilting cotton in white, light pink, dark pink, black and coordinating French-themed fabric
- + 2 yards of low-volume coordinating striped quilting cotton
- +  $\frac{3}{4}$  yard each of 1"- to 2"-wide pom-pom trim in red, white and pink
- +  $\frac{3}{4}$  yard of  $\frac{1}{2}$ "-wide red rickrack trim
- +  $\frac{3}{4}$  yard of 1"-wide black rickrack trim
- + Thread: All-purpose & embroidery in coordinating colors
- + Cut-away stabilizer
- + Water-soluble marker
- + Rotary cutter and cutting mat
- + Temporary spray adhesive
- + French-themed embroidery designs (various sizes; see "Designs.")

## PREPARE

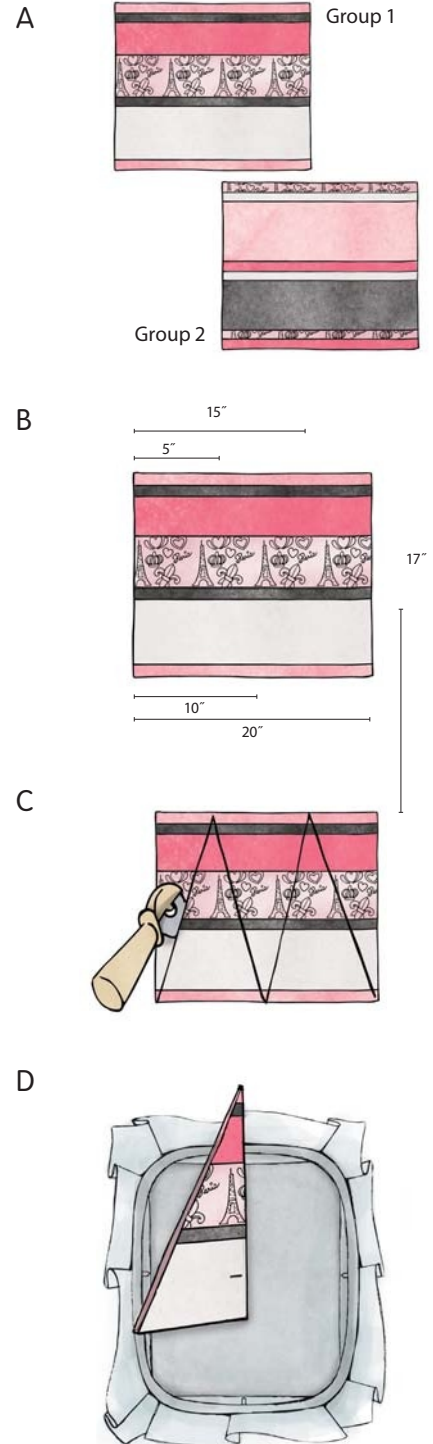
- Fold one  $\frac{1}{8}$  yard of cotton in half widthwise, then trim it down to  $4\frac{1}{4}$ " wide using a rotary cutter.
- Cut the trimmed strip at the fold to make two equal-length strips. Cut one strip in half lengthwise to create two  $2\frac{1}{8}$ " strips. Repeat for the remaining quilting cotton strips for a total of 15 strips: five  $4\frac{1}{4}$ "x22" strips and ten  $2\frac{1}{8}$ "x22" strips.
- Arrange your fabric strips into two groups.
- Stitch the strips together with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance and press the seam allowances in one direction **(A)**.
- Place one stripwork block on the

cutting mat. Trim away the selvage edge and trim the block to 17" tall. On the upper edge, mark 5" and 15" from the trimmed short edge.

- On the lower edge, mark 10" and 20" from the trimmed short edge **(B)**.
- Use a ruler to connect the markings and cut along the lines to create three flags **(C)**. Repeat with the remaining stripwork block to create a total of six flags.

## EMBROIDER

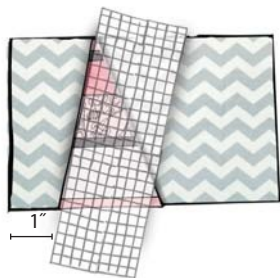
- Load the leafy hearts design into the embroidery machine.
- Hoop a sheet of stabilizer. Using the hoop's template, mark the horizontal and vertical center lines.
- Select a flag from group 1 that has the wide white strip near the wide end. Using a water-soluble marker, mark the wide white segment horizontal and vertical center lines on the wrong side.
- Spray the stabilizer with temporary spray adhesive. Fold the flag lengthwise, right sides together. Place the fold along the vertical line on the hooped stabilizer, aligning the flag horizontal line with horizontal line on the stabilizer **(D)**. Unfold the flag and finger-press to adhere.
- Compare the size of the embroidery design to the size of the wide white segment to be embroidered. Reduce the embroidery design if necessary to fit; stitch the design.
- Remove the flag and stabilizer from the hoop and trim the stabilizer close to the design edge.
- Repeat to create a second identical group one flag.
- Repeat to embroider a fleur de lis on the remaining group one flag, placing







E



F



G



H



it on the wide dark pink segment near the flag wide end.


- Repeat to embroider an Eiffel Tower design on a group two flag, placing it on a wide light pink segment near the pointed end of the flag.
- Repeat to embroider butterflies on a group two flag, placing it on a wide light pink segment near the flag wide end.
- Repeat to embroider a crown on the remaining flag, placing it on a wide light pink segment near the flag wide end.

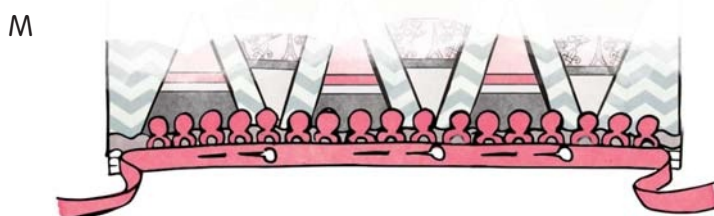
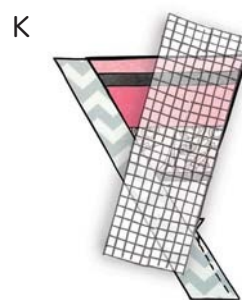
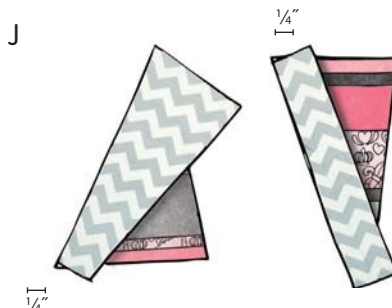
## CONSTRUCT

- Cut a striped quilting-cotton rectangle that measures  $17\frac{1}{2}$ " by the full width of the fabric, ensuring that the stripes run parallel to the short edges and without trimming the selvages.
- Fold the piece in half widthwise. Place one of the flags on the bottom edge of the folded piece with the triangle lower left-hand point 1" from the short selvage edges. Align the bottom edges, place the plastic ruler over the triangle along the left edge and cut with a rotary cutter (E). Set the corner pieces aside.

- Place the plastic ruler on the striped rectangle so that the edge is  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " from the first cut (F). Cut to yield two  $2\frac{1}{2}$ " strips. Repeat the cutting process two more times for a total of 6 strips.
- Place the plastic ruler about 1" from the top left hand corner of the folded striped rectangle, parallel to the folded end. Cut to yield two more corner pieces (G).
- After cutting, you should have four corner pieces and six slanted strips (H).
- Lay out the striped pieces beside the flags, right side up and making sure the stripes run horizontally (I).
- Pair each flag with the piece of striped fabric to the left. Align the pieces so that the short, slanted end of the striped piece intersects with the long flag edge  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the aligned edges. The other end of the ticking piece will extend beyond the tip of the flag (J). Stitch the striped pieces and flags together.
- Press the seams toward the flag fabric. Make sure the ticking edge is unfolded below the tip, and align the ruler with the free slanted edge of the flag (K). Trim so that the ticking is flush with the flag edge.

Love the pattern but want a year-round color scheme? Find the Peggy Party Runner kit and instructional video at [shopsewital.com](http://shopsewital.com).

- Lay out the stitched segments once again. Pair each striped fabric/flag segments with an adjacent piece, align and repeat to stitch the remaining pieces together (**L**).
- Cut two border strips that are 3" wide and the length of the pieced assembly. The stripes should run parallel to the long edge. With right sides together, align the edges of the border strips with those of the pieced assembly. Stitch  $\frac{1}{4}$ " from the aligned edges. Press the seam allowance toward the pieced assembly.
- Trim away the side edges about  $\frac{1}{2}$ " from the nearest flag corner.
- Use the finished pieced runner as a template to cut the backing piece.
- Cut the pieces of rickrack to match the runner length, and pin or glue them in place over the border seams. Stitch through the center of the rickrack with coordinating thread.
- Cut one piece each of the red and pink pom-pom trim to match the runner long edges. Cut two lengths of white pom-pom trim to match the runner short edges. Trim away one ball at each end of the four pieces.
- Align the edge of the trim with the edge of the runner. Pin or glue in place, turning the ends away from the edge (**M**). Using a zipper foot, stitch the trim in place with a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance. Repeat to stitch the remaining trim in place.
- Place the embellished runner and the backing with right sides facing, aligning the edges. Using a zipper foot, stitch  $\frac{3}{8}$ " from the aligned edges. Leave a 6" to 8" opening for turning.
- Trim the seam allowances at the corners, turn the runner right side out and hand or machine stitch the opening closed. 



DESIGNS  
Hearts: Embroidery Library, Leafy Hearts Trio;  
[emblibrary.com](http://emblibrary.com)

Butterflies, tower, crown, fleur de lis: Urban  
Threads, Flight & Dark Butterflies Horizontal

Border, Vintage Crown, Vintage Eiffel Tower  
and Vintage Fleur de Lis; [urbanthreads.com](http://urbanthreads.com).

SOURCES  
Shop Sew It All carries the Peggy Party Runner  
Video & Kit: [shopsewital.com](http://shopsewital.com).





# *Preserve &* **Protect**

BY JESSICA ZIEBARTH

Create a set of washable bowl covers that will keep your food fresh and looking adorable.





## MATERIALS

- + Laminate fabric (See “Sources.”)
- + ¼”-wide braided elastic
- + 90/14 embroidery needle
- + Binder clips (See “Sources.”)
- + Thread: all-purpose, bobbin & embroidery
- + Lightweight tear-away stabilizer
- + Temporary spray adhesive
- + Serving bowl
- + Fun & Fruity designs (See “Designs.”)

## PREPARE

- Place laminate fabric right side down and lightly trace the upper edge of the bowl. Add a 2” seam allowance around the traced circle **(A)**. Mark the center of the circle.

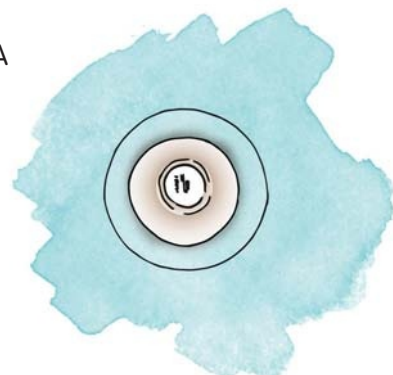
## CUT

- Cut the laminate in a square around the circle, making sure it is large enough to fit in your hoop **(B)**.

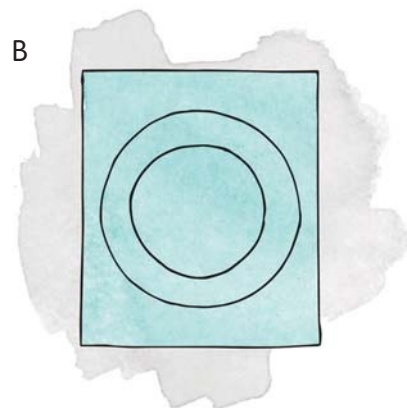
## EMBROIDER

- Load the fruit design onto the machine.
- Reduce the stitching speed on the machine.
- Hoop the lightweight tear-away stabilizer. Spray the back of the laminate with temporary spray adhesive and place onto the hooped stabilizer, making sure the center of the circle is centered in the hoop. Place the hoop onto the machine.
- Thread the machine with the first color and embroider the design. Repeat with the second color to complete the design.
- Remove the hoop from the machine.
- Remove the fabric and stabilizer from the hoop. Tear the stabilizer away from the design.

A



B







## CONSTRUCT

- Cut along the outer traced circle. Lay the cut circle onto another piece of laminate; trace and cut.
- Place the two circles with right sides together, clip.

### Tip

Pins leave permanent holes in laminate. Use quilt clips, binder clips or plastic paper clips to secure fabric layers.

- Stitch around the perimeter of the circle using a  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam allowance, leaving a 3" opening (C).
- Notch the seam allowance (D) and turn the circle right side out.


### Tip

Use a point turner to shape the curved edges of the circle.

- Stitch around the entire perimeter of the circle  $\frac{3}{4}$ " from the edge.

### Tip

Laminate fabric can stick to a regular presser foot during stitching. Use a PTFE foot or apply a piece of masking tape to the presser foot underside.

- Thread elastic into the opening of the circle's perimeter using a bodkin or safety pin. Pull both ends of the elastic so the laminate slightly ruffles (E). Stitch the ends of the elastic together and trim the ends.
- Fold the open edges of laminate inside the elastic casing opening. Stitch the opening closed using a machine or hand stitch. 

#### DESIGNS

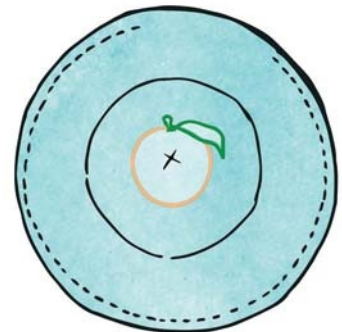
Apple, Blueberries, Peach & Pear: CME, Fun & Fruity Collection; [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com)

#### SOURCES

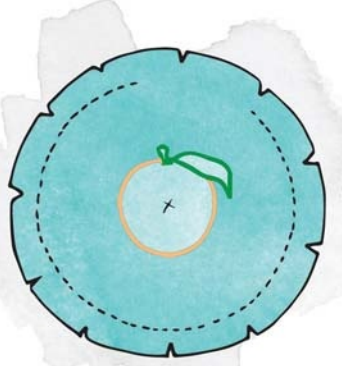
Robert Kaufman provided the Kona Cotton Slicker and Remix Slicker fabric: [robert-kaufman.com](http://robert-kaufman.com).

Shop Sew it All carries Wonder Clips: [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com).

C



D



E

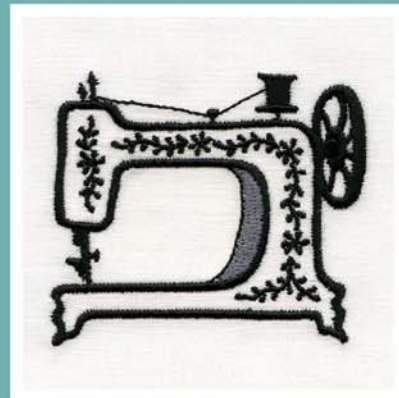






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Featured in the 2017 Internet Embroidery Club are embroidery designs and patterns for this elegant Sewing Hussif and this darling Children's Quilt.





# Quote Me

BY SARA GALLEGOS

Learn to create text-inspired art using embroidery software. Then stitch up fun and easy wall art featuring your favorite inspiring quote.



## WATCH!

Check out Sara's video series for beginners! Find *Absolute Beginner Machine Embroidery* and *My First Quilt* at [shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com).

## MATERIALS

- + ½ yard of neutral-colored solid cotton or cotton-linen blend
- + Embroidery software program with fonts
- + Stabilizer: fusible mesh and tear-away
- + Spray starch alternative
- + 90/14 embroidery needle
- + Embroidery thread in various colors
- + ½ yard of batting or drapery-weight interlining
- + 12"x16" stretched artist canvas
- + Staple gun & staples
- + Ruler
- + Removable fabric marker
- + Favorite quote or short saying
- + Various fonts & embroidery designs as desired (see "Sources.")

## DESIGN

- Scroll through the fonts in your software. Most software programs come with many fonts to choose from. Make a list of your favorites.
- Decide which parts of the quote you want to use with each font. Use the fonts to draw attention to the key words of the quote. In the sample, "with a" and the author's name are in a base font, and each key word uses a unique, different font.
- If available, turn on the hoop outline so you can see the embroidery field boundaries and ensure your design will fit in the hoop.



- Type in the first word and select a font for it. Move the word toward the embroidery field top left corner. Don't worry about final placement yet.
- Select the second word and its font. Position it beside the first word. Repeat to add all the words of the quote, making sure to give credit to the author.
- Adjust the placement of the words to create a balanced design. Consider the most important words; select the key points of those words and drag the size arrows out to enlarge. Play with enlarging and repositioning the words until the arrangement is visually pleasing.
- Select a color scheme and assign a color to each word. Give the key words brighter colors to emphasize them.
- Add any desired additional embroidery designs. Choose designs that coordinate with the quote, like flowers around a saying about growth. Make sure to change the colors to match the color scheme if necessary. Make any final adjustments to the size and placement of the design elements.
- Once pleased with the design, use the software group function to save all the elements as one design.
- If available, color sort the design to ensure the machine stitches elements of the design that are the same color at the same time, eliminating unnecessary thread changes.

## EMBROIDER


- Load the design onto the embroidery machine.
- Prepare the fabric by applying a generous coating of spray starch alternative. Press, lifting the iron and setting it down again so as not to distort the fabric.
- Following the manufacturer's instructions, apply fusible mesh stabilizer to the background fabric wrong side.
- Hoop a piece of tear-away stabilizer.
- Mark the background fabric center. Spray the fabric wrong side with temporary spray adhesive and position the fabric over the hooped stabilizer, aligning the fabric center with the embroidery field center; finger-press to secure. Or secure the fabric using pins or the baste-in-the-hoop feature.
- Insert the hoop into the machine and embroider the design, changing threads as prompted.
- Remove the hoop from the machine and unhoop the fabric. Carefully remove the pins or basting stitches and the excess tear-away stabilizer from the fabric wrong side, leaving the fusible mesh in place.
- Lay a towel over the pressing surface and place the embroidery wrong side up over it. Press the embroidered fabric from the back.





## CONSTRUCT

- Place the batting on a flat surface. Center the artist canvas right side down over the batting.
- Trim the batting so that 2" extends beyond each canvas edge.
- Starting in the center of one side, wrap the batting over the canvas edge and carefully secure to the frame with a staple.
- Repeat to wrap the batting around the opposite side. Don't pull or stretch the batting; simply smooth it over the edge. Repeat to secure the batting to the remaining two canvas-edge centers **(A)**.
- Working from the centers out and alternating sides, add more staples to each side of the canvas, leaving 2" at the corners unsecured.
- Smooth the batting over one corner point, and then fold the side fabric over and secure. Fold over the second side and secure **(B)**.
- Repeat to secure the remaining three corners. Trim away the excess batting so it's even with the frame inside edge.
- Place the embroidered piece right side down on a flat surface. Using a ruler and a removable fabric marker, mark the vertical and horizontal centerlines on the embroidered piece wrong side. Mark the center of the canvas wrong side.

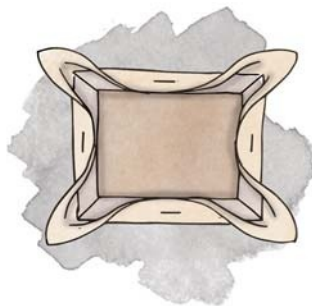
- Position the canvas right side down on the embroidered piece, aligning the marks. Trim the excess fabric so approximately 2" extends beyond the canvas edges.
- Secure the embroidered fabric to the canvas frame using the same method used for the batting.
- Trim away the excess fabric so it's even with the frame inner edges. 

### SOURCES

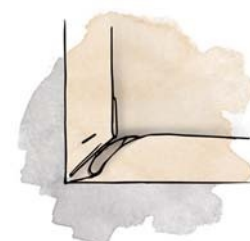
Baby Lock provided the Baby Lock Destiny Embroidery Machine, MasterWorks by Designer's Gallery Embroidery Software, Baby Lock No-Show Fusible Mesh Stabilizer and Baby Lock Tear-Away Firm Stabilizer: [babylock.com](http://babylock.com).

Robert Kaufman provided the Essex Linen fabric: [robertkaufman.com](http://robertkaufman.com).

A



B



## PRO TEXT TIPS



Designing your own wall hanging might seem a little intimidating, but keep in mind that it's just a collection of elements—words, fonts and embroidery designs—put together in a visually pleasing way. Follow these tips for success:

- When choosing a quote, look for something that inspires you, such as a poem, a Bible verse, a song lyric or words of wisdom. Choose something that's one or two lines long, as a longer quote will require smaller-sized lettering, causing words to get lost.
- As you're entering words, don't worry about positioning until the entire quote is in place. Each word is added individually, allowing you to move and resize them separately, so load them all and then think about perfect placement.
- Remember to leave room for any additional designs you plan to add to your quote. Choose designs that coordinate with your quote for additional embellishment.





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# Cross-Stitch on the Edge

BY AMANDA CARESTIO

## JOIN US!

Attend Jamie's live webinar, *Embroidery Inspiration*, on Feb. 24.

Find out more at [craftonlineuniversity.com](http://craftonlineuniversity.com).

Photo: Cat Lane

Founded in 2008, MrXStitch.com is THE place to go online for cutting-edge stitching inspiration — everything from cross-stitch and various kinds of hand and machine embroidery to bead embroidery, quilting, felting and more. From political topics and other provocative imagery to rich historical and cultural traditions to amazing feats of embroidery from skilled artisans and experimental makers alike, the site is inspiring. In addition to art pieces, the site includes regular columnists, like Ruth Singer's "Pinning the Past" which explores historical and modern textile stories across a variety of mediums, and special interest coverage on organiza-

tions like Fine Cell Work, a UK-based organization that trains prisoners in needlework.

The fearless leader behind the blog is Mr X Stitch. An avid (and unlikely) cross-stitcher and regular columnist for *Cross Stitcher* magazine, Jamie Chalmers founded the blog as a place to showcase new talent in textiles of all kinds, including the kind of cross-stitch patterns he wanted to stitch but couldn't find.

Through the blog, his work curating exhibitions and books, and various teaching and speaking engagements, including a recent TED talk, Jamie Chalmers is out to prove that stitchery — and cross-stitch — is an art form

worthy of serious critique and acclaim, with tremendous capacity to heal, to express and to empower.

### **CME: You're not a typical cross-stitcher, are you?**

I guess I'm not the first type of person you imagine when you think of the term "cross-stitcher," and, although we live in a fairly broad-minded world, there's still an element of surprise. It's a curiosity that the gender bias in embroidery remains; however, if there were a lot of manbroiderers out there, I'd not be talking with you now!

**CME: You founded your site in 2008. Has the embroidery as art landscape changed since then? Do you think embroidery is being**



"DEMS"

### recognized in a different way?

I think the embroidery as art debate is going to remain unresolved for quite some time. Despite there being a ton of amazing embroiderers creating art that is inspiring and astonishing, it's rare that you see embroidery as an art form in the same way as oil painting, sculpture and such like. It's only when existing artists of note like Grayson Perry or Tracey Emin choose to use textiles that the art world seems to pay attention. It's quite frustrating as I've had the privilege of seeing hundreds of fantastic textile artists over the years, and yet their appearance in the large familiar galleries is scarce. Maybe that will change in the end, but anyone can pick up a needle and thread and potentially change the art world, and that kind of democracy undermines the value structure that underpins the extortionate world of art. So it's not a popular idea.

### CME: What are you currently working on?

This year I've been mostly concentrating on my forthcoming book

— *The Mr X Stitch Guide to Cross Stitch* — which will be coming out this July. It's shaping up to be a fantastic book that will not only teach you how to cross-stitch but will show you all aspects of the form, from craftivism to the art debate. As well as exploring how to design cross-stitch, the book features outliers whose work will inspire you. It's got sumptuous photography, and I think it's going to be a cracker!

### CME: Where do you do most of your stitching?

These days I mostly stitch while traveling. I moved into a new home this year and a lot of spare time is taken up with DIY, as well as things like allotmenting, dog walking and spending time with my wife. Because I also have a full-time job, the time I have around that is spent doing all kinds of Mr X Stitch-related stuff, so getting time to actually sit down and stitch is a rare treat. However, traveling time, whether on trains or planes, is the perfect chance to listen to some good podcasts or audiobooks and get some stitching done.

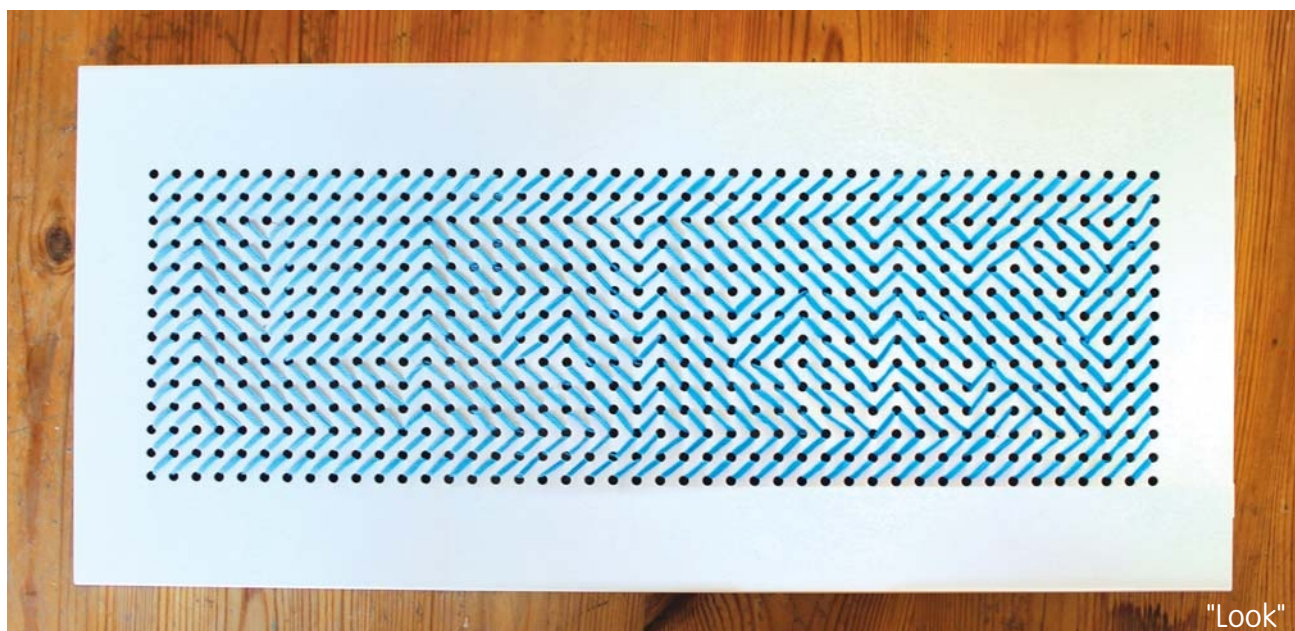
### CME: Time constraints aside, what would you make?

What I'd like to do, if I had the time, is learn Japanese embroidery. It's the most disciplined embroidery type, but the final outcomes are stunning, and I'd love to create work where people couldn't fault the technique, and then see what boundaries could be pushed in terms of content.

### CME: What artist is currently inspiring you?

One of my favorite machine embroidery artists is Meredith Woolnough, who uses machine stitch to create organic looking forms. She stitches onto soluble interface, building up layer upon layer of stitches that, when the interface is dissolved, creates free-standing structures that are simply stunning. Her work is so delicate and so clever – they really are fantastic.





**CME: Do you find that embroidery kits, motifs and machine embroidery designs are more diverse than they used to be?**

There's a real duality between the mainstream retail offerings and the kits that you can buy online. The internet provides smaller designers the opportunity to create and sell kits with more interesting designs and with edgier content. However it's rare that these producers can scale up to meet the needs of the bigger craft stores, and so those stores are reliant on the designs of the big companies. The big companies can only produce so many designs and their production schedules don't necessarily give them to the scope to quickly react to new trends. Magazines have some influence, in that they give people designs to stitch,


If you buy an embroidery kit and you complete it, then you have a lovely pastime and well done. The minute you start adapting your work to improve the technique, you are becoming a craftsperson. And the minute you start adapting that piece of work to reflect your own interests, you are an artist.

—Jamie Chalmers on stitchery as art, TEDxBedford 2014

but the complexity of major publishing houses makes them somewhat risk averse, so it's rare that you see new innovative ideas from them. So there's a kind of slow inertia, and while the cross-stitch audience might be growing tired of kittens and cottages (although they're both really nice things), the world of cross-stitch production is taking a long time to react.

**CME: What first steps should someone take if they're interested in doing more customized and artful machine embroidery designs of their own creation?**

The good thing about the world of machine embroidery and digitizing designs is that the learning curves are getting shorter, so it's easier than ever for people to command their machines

to create interesting designs. I've been fortunate on Mr X Stitch to have two fantastic machine embroidery columns — Gear Threads by the gang at Urban Threads and Ghost in the Embroidery Machine by Erich Campbell — and there's a ton of inspiration and wisdom to be found in those archives. Read as much as you can about the basic principles of machine embroidery and what variables are important. Once you understand the basics, you can begin making magic. The only other thing I'd add is to just design, and design, and design and design. As with any skill, you have to put in the hours to get good and it's the same with design. By continually pushing at your own creativity, you can discover your "voice" and start to produce work that reflects who you are. 





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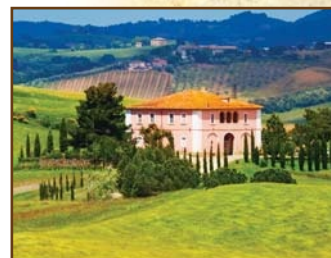
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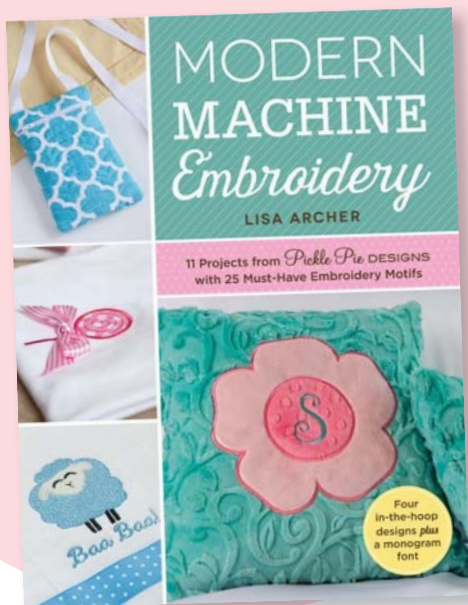
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## Book Excerpt!

# Monograms

Monograms are beautiful just about everywhere! They're the perfect touch on embroidery blanks such as makeup bags and koozies, as well on everyday items such as towels, tote bags, and more. They're fast and easy to stitch and allow you to whip up the perfect gift in no time!



# Let's Create a Monogram!

There are countless ways to style a monogram. Have fun experimenting with different layouts, thread colors, and fonts until you find the style that you love.

## Traditional Monograms

There are a few basic styles that follow traditional monogram etiquette. In general, a traditional monogram features the first, middle, and last initials of a name. In the examples below, the initials F (for first name), M (for middle name), and L (for last name) are used to demonstrate placement in the monograms.

A traditional monogram where the initials F, M, and L are arranged horizontally in a serif font, all of the same size.

This monogram style shows the initials, in order, and all of the same size, and is appropriate for both men and women.

A traditional monogram where the initials F, L, and M are arranged horizontally in a serif font. The last initial, M, is larger and placed between the first and middle initials.

In this classic style, the last initial is larger and is placed between the first and middle initials and can be used for both men and women.

A single letter monogram consisting of a large, stylized serif letter 'L'.

A single letter monogram works for both men and women and traditionally uses the last name initial, but the first initial can be used instead.

A monogram for a married couple where the wife's first initial (W), the last name initial (L) in a larger size, and the husband's first initial (H) are arranged horizontally in a serif font.

This style shows the classic monogram for a married couple with the wife's first initial (W), then the last name initial (L) in a larger size, then the husband's first initial (H).

## Nontraditional Monograms

We've seen just a small sampling of the many traditional monogram styles. Now let's explore some fun ways to shake up your monogram.

A nontraditional monogram where the first and middle name initials (F and M) are stacked vertically on the left, and the larger last name initial (L) appears on the right.

Here, the first and middle name initials are stacked on the left, and the larger last name initial appears on the right.

A nontraditional monogram where the initials F, M, and L are arranged horizontally in a serif font, slanting down to the right.

This example shows the initials in order slanting down to the right.

A nontraditional monogram where the wife's first name initial (W) is stacked over the husband's first name initial (H) with a horizontal bar between them.

A popular monogram style for today's newly married couple—the wife's first name initial stacked over the husband's first name initial with a bar between them.

A nontraditional monogram for couples where the wife's first name initial (W), a plus sign (+), and the husband's first name initial (H) are arranged horizontally in a serif font.

Another popular monogram for couples uses the wife's first name initial, a plus sign and the husband's first name initial.



## Framed Monograms

These three monograms combine lettering with three simple embroidery designs found on the CD that accompanies *Modern Machine Embroidery*.



First name initial inside the Raw Edge Appliqué Frame design.



Three-initial monogram in a “circle” style, created with embroidery monogram software, and placed within the Circle Appliqué design.



Wife’s first name initial, last name initial, husband’s first name initial inside the Anchor embroidery design.

### *Tip*

There are many wonderful monogram software programs on the market that allow you to simply type in the monogram letters and choose from dozens of styles, such as the circle monogram shown. Choose the monogram style you like best and use a font in your embroidery software or your embroidery machine to create your monogram.



Grab the book for full instructions on monogramming a custom towel. Find *Modern Machine Embroidery* at **[shopsewitall.com](http://shopsewitall.com)**.



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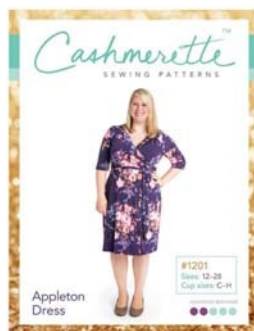
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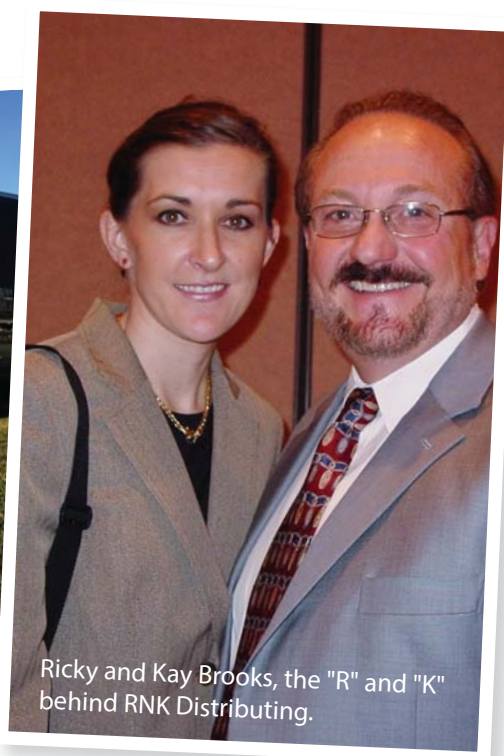
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Ricky and Kay Brooks, the "R" and "K" behind RNK Distributing.

# Stitch Biz: RNK Distributing

BY AMANDA CARESTIO

Although it's hard to imagine life without embroidery, embroidery machines for the home sewist were not common until the mid-'90s. Before that time, machine embroidery was largely done only on a commercial level. When machine companies realized there was a market among home sewists, they rushed to fill the need. However, as anyone who experimented with those early machines can attest, the results weren't always as intended. While the commercial industry had been using the same supplies, such as stabilizers, for years without major changes or innovations, these supplies weren't being manufactured for or made available to home sewists. Enter Ricky and Kay Brooks, the husband-and-wife team and the "R" and "K" behind RNK Distributing.

Owners of one of the largest sewing machine retail locations in the country at the time, Ricky and Kay saw firsthand where the supply — or supplies — did not meet the demand of eager home sewists. Borrowing what they could from the backings used commercially — which were no more specialized than basic cut-away, tear-away and water-soluble stabilizers — the early embroidery machines were not performing to their full potential.

At the same time, sewing was experiencing a bit of a renaissance. The sewing machine was being repositioned — moving from utilitarian object to a tool for creative exploration and fun. "The sewing machine became known as a fun machine," says Ricky Brooks. While the commercial embroidery

industry focused largely on hats, jackets and uniforms, it quickly became clear that home sewists wanted to embroider a much larger array of projects. More specialized products were needed — and quickly. "We set out to manufacture stabilizers that home sewers needed for every project they wanted to sew," says Brooks.

In addition to creating new stabilizers for the home market, the duo focused on solving the issues home machine embroiderers faced. "Basically, in our case, necessity was the mother of invention. When we experienced issues, we set out to create products to resolve them." Among the early issues experienced were gummed-up needles and machinery from stabilizers that weren't created for home embroi-

dery machines. The Brookses worked with a chemist to perfect the formula to avoid this issue; this technology is still used in their stabilizer products.

After cleaning metallic bits from machine parts for years, the team was well aware that although beautiful, metallic thread posed issues for the home embroidery machine. There were already products on the market, but they thought they could improve upon them. "Kay and I decided we'd never release product for the sake of releasing product. It had to be unique, not just a me-too product," says Brooks. They set out on their quest and found a factory that could produce a product to suit their needs. Thus was born the Floriani Premium metallic thread line: through a unique process, polyester cord is wrapped in metal and coated with Mylar. It can be used like a regular sewing thread — no larger-eye needle necessary.

Everything RNK produces is created with the end user and application in mind and from their love of and extensive experience with machine embroidery, including their Floriani software. "People just want to play, not spend hours of time at the computer," says Brooks. During the research and development process, Ricky noticed that while many people had software, a large percentage of those people had not actually used it. What was missing was a final step that would give people the confidence to actually use the designs they created. "Kay spent years developing a formula for design stitch count and stabilizers." Based on this formula, Floriani software includes a recommendation step for the kind and amount of stabilizer to use based on the design density and the intended fabric selection.

Now based in Steamboat Springs, CO, and serving as managers for the company they started, Ricky and Kay are still very much involved in the machine embroidery industry. Having expanded from its early days, the company now produces and distributes under four brand names: RNK; Floriani machine embroidery stabilizers, thread and software; Jenny Haskins embroidery supplies; and

Quilter's Select thread and batting with Alex Anderson. They also produce a wide breadth of beautiful embroidery designs (from whimsical designs for babies to intricate florals and fonts) and hold Hands-On® teaching events across the country. From the storefront to a major player in machine embroidery supplies, RNK is set to lead the way for years to come. 



Pre-RNK booths



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